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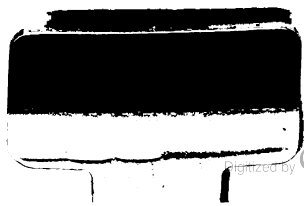

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THE WORKS

OF

HEINRICH HEINE

IV.

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THE WORKS

OF

HEINRICH HEINE

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

CHARLES GODFREY LELAND
(HANS BREITMANN)

VOLUME IV.

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1893

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THE SALON

OR

LETTERS ON ART, MUSIC, POPULAR LIFE AND POLITICS

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1893

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE *Salon* of Heine, as it was first published, consisted of papers on the annual exhibitions of pictures held in Paris during several years, and a portion of the "Germany." In the last complete German edition of his works, this arrangement was changed, and all his letters on art and music included in one volume entitled *Lutetia: Berichte über Politik, Kunst und Volksleben* (Reports relative to Politics, Art, and Popular Life). This I have translated, restoring the title *Salon*, because it is now so generally known, that many might suppose that the series was imperfect unless that name could be found in it. And as the whole work is, though very discursive or varied, based on artistic, literary, or æsthetic subjects, it will, I think, be generally admitted that the *Salon* is the most appropriate title for it.

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And here I may remark, as I have indeed done in a previous preface, that I know no writer whose works are to be judged so little by mere title or subject, so far as interest or merit is concerned, as Heine's. For as he touched nought which he did not adorn or render fascinating, it was impossible for him to write on anything whatever without displaying the same extraordinary *esprit*, wit, erudition, knowledge of men and life, grotesqueness, pathos, and originality which are to be found in the "Pictures of Travel," "Germany," the "Florentine Nights," or "Shakespeare's Women and Maidens." Had he given to the world papers on any subjects in the "Cyclopædia," chosen at random, they would all have been equally amusing, edifying, irritating, charming, and now and then disgusting to those who cannot take him as he really was. A few writers have possessed his merits, and many his faults, but certainly no human being ever combined the whole so strangely, and yet with a marvellous harmony, which becomes more evident as we learn to know the man.

In one very important respect the *Salon* is by far the ablest of Heine's works. If, as I

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declared in the preface to "Germany," he *sometimes* manifested in it an inability to fully grasp, or fairly treat, or clearly set forth, the vast problems in social science, literature, and especially philosophy, which he so daringly discussed, despite the marvellous sagacity which he often displayed, it can on the other hand be claimed that in the *Salon* he shows himself absolutely a master in criticising pictures, music, and the stage. That is to say, that, in keeping with his whole character, he is often weak where he should be strong, and admirably or perfectly strong where weakness might have been anticipated or pardonable. It would almost seem as if, as has been said of life, that the only thing to be expected in him is the unexpected.

In the *Salon* of 1831, our author with unerring eye detected, and with marvellous ability discussed and praised, certain pictures, every one of which, as time has shown, acquired a world-wide reputation. He carefully avoided, in doing this, all technical terms, so that every reader can clearly understand him, and he brings the paintings themselves before us as perfectly as words can do. This is characteristic of all the

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criticisms in the book. If I have sometimes ventured in my notes to dissent from certain canons which he has advanced, and to find fault with minor details, it is not to be understood by any means that I do not admire his work as a whole.

The secret of his great skill as an art-critic may be found in this, that he was born and passed his youth in Düsseldorf among artists, that he was taught to draw by the great Cornelius, and to think on art, and to familiarise himself with its history, by Professor Friedrich Thiersch. Having been myself a pupil of the latter, and written out his course of lectures, I feel justified in asserting that a Heine certainly could not have done the same without acquiring such a fundamental and thorough knowledge of art in its chief branches as very few professional critics have enjoyed. If the reader will simply carefully peruse the *Æsthetik* of Thiersch, and reflect on what must have been learned if the pupil resorted daily to the great galleries of Munich to verify its lessons, and remember that with this a great number of master-works on art were also carefully studied, and that after the course of lectures

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was ended all the great galleries in Europe were visited with Kugler's *Kunstgeschichte* under the arm, he will admit that our author was not without qualification to discuss pictures. But Thiersch was a great general scholar, as celebrated for Greek learning as for art, and above all gifted as a teacher. Heine speaks gratefully of him in the *Reisebilder*, and his works indicate throughout the influence of the master who taught with immense and minute knowledge the development and systematic correspondences of all the arts in all ages.

He who has received a true coherent *education* in art and its history, when young, and not picked up his knowledge here and there loosely, has a key to archæology, history, *belles lettres* and all that is connected with them, which is, I may say, as yet little understood out of Germany. Heine had enjoyed such a training, and it enabled him in after years to enter readily into numerous fields of culture to which the access would have otherwise been difficult. He evidently had an innate love for and intelligence of music, due probably to hereditary endowment; for it is certain that, with the exception of the Gypsies of

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Eastern Europe, no race in the world is so musical as the Jews. In this he indeed shows himself, if anything, more familiarly and easily at home than in discussing the "formative" or plastic arts; nor do I believe that the sense or sincerity of his remarks on the subject have ever been questioned. As regards the stage, he was not only himself an author of plays, but had been from youth upwards familiar with acting, and studied *Dramaturgie* conscientiously, as his works indicate.

I can hardly rise to the height of the stupendous compliment paid by Balzac to Heine when he declared the latter to be the best representative of German literature in France and of French literature in Germany, and which I believe to be chiefly based on the merit of the *Salon;* but I believe this work to be, as a whole, the one which, of its kind, combines more suggestive thought, amusement, and information than any other with which I am acquainted. I say "amusing," and so it would be were it for one thing alone, which is that the author, to a shrewd observer, so frequently shows himself perfectly unconscious of having said a good or wise thing

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—as is proved by his not following it up—and anon manifesting pride and delight at having hit upon some hardly passable bit of vulgar rubbish, which he makes the most of—reminding one of the monkey who rescued from the fire many objects, among others the baby, to which, however, he attached no special value. Thus he was certainly quite unconscious of his absolutely marvellous ability in describing a person or a picture; else he would have given us more such masterpieces, and developed the art of such word-photography to a far greater degree; while, on the other hand, his pitiful and disagreeable abuse of Raupach, Spontini, and other small people not worth mentioning, is elaborated with a care and interest which is as melancholy as it is childish.

I trust that the reader will be tolerant as regards the notes which I have appended. As I have known many of the people, lived in the scenes described at the time, and been deeply interested in the subjects discussed, I have ventured here and there to offer my own opinions freely, and even to give reminiscences and remarks suggested by the text, in a manner which some severe critics may possibly regard as being

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rather too gossipy, if not in bad form. Of all such I can only beg pardon, and plead in excuse the exceedingly kind reception which was generally given by reviewers to the notes in the volumes which have already appeared.

CHARLES GODFREY LELAND.

HOMBURG-LES-BAINS,
October 14, 1892.

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CONTENTS

THE SALON.

PAGE

THE EXHIBITION OF PICTURES OF 1831— 1

ARY SCHEFFER 4

HORACE VERNET 17

DELACROIX 24

DECAMPS 32

LESSORE 44

SCHNETZ 45

LEOPOLD ROBERT 48

DELAROCHE 62

THE EXHIBITION OF PICTURES OF 1833 95

THE EXHIBITION OF PICTURES OF 1843 118

THE FRENCH STAGE.

CONFIDENTIAL LETTERS ADDRESSED TO M. AUGUST LEWALD—

FIRST LETTER 131

SECOND LETTER 146

THIRD LETTER 161

FOURTH LETTER 173

FIFTH LETTER 187

SIXTH LETTER 198

SEVENTH LETTER 217

EIGHTH LETTER 231

NINTH LETTER 242

TENTH LETTER 265

Digitized by Google

PAGE

GEORGE SAND—A SUPPLEMENT 284
A LATER NOTICE (1854) 297
LETTERS ON MUSIC FROM PARIS (1840–1847)—
SPONTINI AND MEYERBEER 314
THE MUSICAL SEASON OF 1841 329
THE CARNIVAL IN PARIS 349
ROSSINI AND MENDELSSOHN 362
THE MUSICAL SEASON OF 1843—
FIRST PAPER 372
SECOND PAPER 383
THE MUSICAL SEASON OF 1844—
FIRST PAPER 406
A LATER NOTICE 446

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THE SALON.

THE EXHIBITION OF PICTURES OF 1831.

WRITTEN IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 1831.

THE Exhibition (*Salon*) is at length closed, its pictures having been shown since the beginning of May. They were generally looked at with only fleeting glances, for people's minds were busy with other things, and anxiously occupied with perplexing politics. As for me, who had but recently come for the first time to the capital of France, and who was bewildered with innumerable new impressions, I was much less able than others to wander through the halls of the Louvre in a befitting tranquil state of mind. There they stood, close one by the other, three thousand beautiful pictures, the poor children of Art, to whom the multitude threw only the alms of an indifferent look. How they begged in silent sorrow for a little bit of sympathy, or to be sheltered in some tiny corner of the heart! It was all in vain, for all hearts were full of families of

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their own feelings, and had neither board nor lodging to bestow on such strangers. Aye, there it was; the Exhibition was like an orphan asylum —a crowd of infants gathered here and there, left to themselves, and none of them related one to the other in any way. They moved our souls, as they are wont to be moved on seeing child-like helplessness and youthful despair (*Zerrissenheit*).

With what a different feeling are we seized on entering a gallery of those Italian paintings which are not exposed like foundlings to the cold world, but which, on the contrary, have drawn their nourishment from the breast of one great common mother, and who, like members of one large family, live together in peace and unity, speaking the same language, though they may not utter the same words!

The Catholic Church, which was once such a mother for this and all other arts, is now herself poor and helpless. Every painter now works according to his own taste and on his own account. The caprices of the day, the whims of the wealthy, or of his own idle heart, suggest subjects; the palette offers the most glowing colours, and the canvas is patient to endure. Add to this, that now a badly understood Romanticism flourishes among French painters, and according to its chief rule, every artist strives to

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paint as differently as possible from all others, or, as the current phrase has it, to develop his own individuality (*seine Eigenthümlichkeit hervortreten zu lassen*). What pictures are thereby full oft produced may be imagined easily enough.

As the French have in any case much sound common-sense, they have always decided accurately as to failures, readily recognised what was truly characteristic (*Eigenthümliche*), and easily fished out the true pearls from this pictured ocean of many colours. The artists whose works were most discussed and most highly praised were Ary Scheffer, Horace Vernet, Delacroix, Decamps, Lessore, Schnetz, Delaroche, and Robert.[1] I will therefore limit myself to repeating public opinion, which differs little on the whole from mine, and also avoid as much as possible criticism of technical merits or defects. It would be of little use as regards pictures which will not remain in public galleries exposed to general view, and of still less advantage to the German reader, who has not seen them at all. It is only fleeting comments (*Winke*) or hints as to the subject and significance of these pictures which can interest the latter; and, as a conscientious reporter (*referant*) I begin with the works of—

[1] The preceding sentence is omitted in the French version.

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Ary Scheffer.

The Faust and Marguerite of this painter attracted the most attention during the first month of the Exhibition, because the best works of Delaroche and Robert were not shown till later. Moreover, those who have never seen anything by Scheffer will be at once struck by his manner, which expresses itself particularly in expression by colour. His enemies say of him that he paints only with snuff and soft soap (*grüne Seife*). I will not say how far they do him wrong. His brown shadows are often much affected, and fail to produce the chiaroscuro of Rembrandt which the artist aimed at. His pictures have mostly that repulsive (*fatale*) colour which would disgust us, if we, wearied with a night's watching and in an ill-temper, should see our faces in one of those green mirrors such as are found in old inns where the diligence stops of a morning.[1] But, when we look long

[1] In the original our author says, "such as may often disgust us when," *et cætera*. But as the green mirrors alluded to were great rarities even in his time, the suggestion that the reader has *often* used them after a night's watching may remind those who have read my *Etruscan Roman Remains*, of Peter Pipernus, who, after relating the extraordinary story of a man whose humpback was carried away by the fairies, proceeds to assure us in an airy manner that the same incident had frequently occurred in his neighbourhood.—*Translator.*

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and more nearly into Scheffer's pictures, we learn to like his manner—*on se réconcilie avec ce faire*—we find that his treatment of the whole is very poetic, and we perceive that the glow of feeling breaks through these gloomy colours, glittering like sun-rays through dark clouds or misty vapour. This painting, which seems smeared or swept ill-temperedly, those tired-to-death (*todmüden*) colours, with uncanny vague outlines, have actually a good effect in the pictures of Faust and Marguerite. Both are three-quarter pictures.[1] Faust is seated in a red mediæval settle (*Sessel*) by a table covered with parchment-bound books, on which rests his arm, which supports his head. The right arm, with the palm of the hand turned outwards, rests on his hip akimbo.[2] The garment is soft-soap-greenly-blue. The face, almost in profile, is snuff-tawny-pale (*Fahl*), the features are noble and stern. Despite its sickly and mistaken colour, hollow cheeks, shrivelled lips, and general desolation, this face still bears traces of its former beauty, and as the eyes ray out a gentle melancholy light, we are reminded of a beautiful ruin lit by the moon.

Yes, the man is a beautiful human ruin; in the

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[1] *Knie-stücke*—kit-cat.

[2] French version—"Tombe le long de sa hanche."

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folds of his weather-worn eyebrows brood mysteriously learned owls, and behind that forehead evil spirits lurk. Then at midnight there are thrown open the tombs of dead desires, pale shades come trooping forth, and through the empty chambers of the brain glides, but as with fettered feet, the ghost of Margaret. The merit of the painter is great in this, that he has only painted the head of a man, and that the mere sight of it suggests to us the feelings and thoughts which move in his brain and heart. In the background, almost invisible and quite green—repulsively green—appears the head of Mephistopheles, the evil spirit, the father of lies, the god of soft soap.[1]

Margaret is a side-piece of equal value. She also sits on a *fauteuil* of faded red. Her spinning-wheel, with the distaff full of wool, rests by her untouched, and she holds in her hand an open prayer-book, in which she does not read, and in which appears a faded many-coloured picture of the Virgin Mary. Her head hangs down in such a manner that the greater portion of it, which is almost in profile, is strangely shadowed. It seems as if the gloomy soul of Faust threw its shadow over the face of

[1] It may be as well to note here that "soft soap," as a slang synonym for flattery and cajolery, has a depth of expressiveness in English which is not attached to *grüne Seife* in German. French version—"Le dieu du savon vert."

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the calm girl. The two pictures hang near one another, and it is very remarkable that all the effect of light falls on the face of Faust; that of Margaret, on the contrary, receives much less, while the outline details of her figure are much more illuminated. The effect thus gained by the latter picture is indescribably enchanting. Gretchen's bodice is a soap-like green, a little black cap scantily covers her head, and her smooth golden hair presses forth the more brilliantly. Her face is a noble touching oval, and the features of a beauty which she would fain hide from modesty. She is, with her dear blue eyes, modesty herself. A tranquil tear, a pearl of silent pain, falls adown her cheek. We see in her the Margaret of Wolfgang Goethe, but she has read all of Friedrich Schiller, and she is far more sentimental than naïve, and is much more heavenly ideal than gracefully light. Perhaps she is too serious and true to be graceful, for grace consists in movement. With this she has in her that which is so trustworthy, so solid, so real, like a louis-d'or which one has in one's pocket. In one word she is a young German girl, and looking deeply into the melancholy violets of her eyes, one thinks of Germany, the perfumed linden (lime) trees, Holtz's poems, the stone statue of Roland before the Town Council House, the old conrector, his rosy niece, the

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forester's house with the deer's antlers, bad tobacco and good fellows, grandmother's churchyard stories, faithful night-watchmen, friendship, first love, and all such sweet fads and fancies (*Schnurrpfeifereien*). Really Scheffer's Margaret cannot be described. She has more feeling than face. She is a painted soul. When I passed by her I involuntarily said "*Liebes Kind!*"—dear child.

We find, unfortunately, Scheffer's style in all his pictures, and though it may be appropriate to his Faust and Margaret, it utterly displeases us in subjects which require a cheerful, vigorous, clear, and well-coloured treatment, as, for instance, in a little picture representing dancing schoolchildren. With his misty sad colour, Scheffer has given us a troop of small goblins.[1] However remarkable his talent for portraits may be, and

[1] Not only was Scheffer the first to popularise in art the use, often to excess, of the "soft soap" green and ashy-grey which has of late years attained its culmination in decorative art in the sage, tea-green, and other tints which specially haunt the eyes during *nausea marina* or sea-sickness, and are almost peculiar to death and decay, but he also invented the art of substituting other colours for those which occur in Nature, so that it is now not unusual to see landscapes in which all the foliage is anything but green, the trunks anything but brown, and everything in hues which are sad, strange, and ghastly. This, when allied to talent or genius in other respects, produces effects which are certainly original, but which when imitated by feeble artists are simply silly. It is not every one who can get to Corinth.—*Translator.*

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how much his originality of conception deserves praise, so much the more repulsive in this respect is his colour. And yet there was in this Exhibition a portrait to which his manner was perfectly adapted. It was only with such vague, deceitful, deadly faded hues, without character, that the man could be painted whose fame consists in this, that his thoughts can never be read in his face, or rather that we ever read in it their opposite. I mean the man to whom we might give a kick behind without the disappearance in front of the stereotyped smile from his countenance.[1] I mean the man who swore fourteen false oaths, and whose talent for lying was employed to their advantage by all Governments in France in succession, whenever a deadly act of perfidy was wanted,[2] so that he reminds me of that Locusta, the old compounder of poisons, who lived like an infamous heirloom in the house of Augustus, and was silently and safely transmitted by, and served one emperor after another, and one against the other, with her diplomatic draughts.[3] When I stand before the portrait of the evil and false man, whom Scheffer has painted to the very life, even depicting with hemlock-

[1] *I.e.* Talleyrand. Omitted in the French version.
[2] Omitted in the French version.
[3] Here the passage ends in the "complete French version."

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poison colours the fourteen false oaths in his features, then the freezing thought runs through me, "For whom will he brew the next potion in London?"

The Henry IV. and Louis Philippe I., two equestrian pictures of life-size, in any case deserve special attention. The first, *le roi par droit de conquête et par droit de naissance*, lived before my time. I only know that he wore a Henri-quatre beard, and therefore I cannot testify to the likeness. The other, *le roi des barricades, le roi par la grâce du peuple souveraine*, is my contemporary, and I can judge whether his portrait resembles him or not. I saw the latter ere I had the pleasure of beholding his Majesty himself, and yet I recognised him at once.[1] I saw him perhaps in a too exalted condition of the soul, that is, on the first celebration of the anniversary of the Revolution, when he rode through the streets of Paris in the midst of the rejoicing National Guard and the decorated men of July, who all roared the *Marseillaise* and *Parisienne* as if mad, dancing ever and anon *La Carmagnole*. His Majesty the King

[1] From this point all is omitted in the French version to the words, "otherwise the picture is fairly successful." This is as good as the anecdote of the gentleman who, having casually met her Majesty the Queen, assured her that he remembered her face perfectly, but could not recall her name.

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sat high on horse, half like a compelled *triumphator*, half like a volunteer captive who is adorning a triumphal procession; a dethroned emperor rode symbolically or prophetically at his side; his two youthful sons also rode by him like blooming hopes, and his turgid red cheeks glowed out from the forest darkness of his great whiskers, and his sweetly greeting eyes glittered with joy and embarrassment. In Scheffer's picture he looks less gay and festive (*Kurzweilig*), but rather almost grieving, and as if he were riding over the Place de Grève, where his father was executed, and his horse seems to stumble. I believe that in the portrait the head is not so much run up into a point as in the illustrious original, which ever recalled to me an old song:—

"Es steht eine Tann' im tiefen Thal,
Ist unten breit und oben schmal."

"A fir-tree deep in the vale doth grow,
'Tis broad above and small below."

Otherwise the picture is fairly successful, and very like, but I did not detect this likeness till I had *myself* seen the King, which seems to me to be a doubtful, very doubtful, consideration as regards Scheffer's merits as a portrait painter.

Portrait painters are divisible into two classes. Some have the marvellous talent of exactly per-

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ceiving and reproducing those traits which may give any stranger an idea of the face represented, so that he at once grasps the character of the unknown originals, and would immediately recognise the latter should he chance to meet him. This manner or merit we find among the old masters, especially in Holbein, Titian, and Vandyke; and what at once strikes us in their portraits is the directness which so infallibly guarantees them resemblance to their long-deceased originals. "One would swear that this portrait is perfect," we often say when wandering through galleries.[1]

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[1] This mysterious and very German theory of the "indescribable" art, which creates portraits which are so like to their originals as to bear full proof of perfection in themselves, is very pretty and popular, but not really *true*. There are very great painters and distinguished authors into whose works a ray of the *genial*, of life-like vivacity, or quaintness never penetrates, while there are others, especially among the very inferior draughtsmen for comic papers, who introduce even into very bad portraits or pictures such vividness that we conclude at once that we have the true air of the original, when the expression, it may be, is altogether foreign. Every artist of genius —and such were Holbein and Titian—by dint of experience, succeeded in giving a very perfect and *natural* expression of some kind to every portrait, but that this naturalness or ease as set forth by them was (as Heine virtually declares) so predominantly *characteristic* that it could be at once recognised not only by all contemporaries, but all mankind down through the ages, is incredible. To illustrate this I may mention that there is a distinguished photographer who has taken me at least twelve times, every likeness having been a caricature. In twenty sittings to different photographers in

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Another or second manner of painting portraits prevails, especially among the English and French, who aim no higher than at the ready recognition of some one whom we already know, and only place upon the canvas those traits which call back into our memories the face and character of the well-known original. Such artists work for the memory alone, and they are specially dear to well-bred parents and tender married couples, who show us their family pictures after dinner, and can never sufficiently assure us how much the portrait resembled dear little Johnny before he had the whooping-cough, and how astonishingly like the original is the portrait of "my dear husband"—if we only knew him !—a delight which is reserved for us until Mein Herr shall have returned from the Brunswick fair.

America, every effort was a perfect success. The reason for this was that the former "artist" is never at an end of telling me to "sit up a little higher—turn your eyes just a quarter of an inch more to the right—just smile—a little—a little less, sir, if you please—now incline your arm just a *little* more to the right—now then—Now !" The Americans always let me sit as I please, without a fork in the back of my neck to recall Roman slavery—all at ease—the result being invariably a *success*, if not a great picture. Now there are artists—not all, but *many*—who can give this air of *sans gêne* and characteristic ease even to very bad pictures. This is not saying *at all* that the great portrait painters did not catch the air of "naturalness in repose," it is only a protest against the mystical and marvellous theory which Heine, who, like a true German, could never get enough

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Scheffer's Leonore is, as regards colour, far superior to his other works.[1] The story is transferred to the time of the Crusades, by which the painter gained an excuse for displaying brilliant costumes, and a more romantic colour. The army returning homeward passes by, and poor Leonore does not find in it her beloved. There prevails in all this picture a soft melancholy—nothing forebodes in it the fearful spectre of the coming night. And therefore I believe that because the painter has placed the scene in the pious time of the Crusades, the deserted Leonore will not blaspheme Deity, nor will the dead rider carry her away. The Leonore of Bürger lived in an age of Protestantism and of critical examination, and her lover left for the War of Seven Years to conquer Silesia for the good of the friend of Voltaire. The Leonore of Scheffer lived in a Catholic believing age, when hundreds of thousands, inspired by religious ideas, sewed every one a red cross on his coat, and wandered

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of "voonders oopon voonders," naturally advocated. What it all amounts to is, that our author declares that the knack, *chique*, or faculty of giving expression (which is really very frequent in inferior artists who never rise), is the *one* characteristic which distinguishes the true and great artist from second-rate pot-boilers, "English painters," and the like.—*Translator.*

[1] French version—"La Léonore est un morceau fort distingué sous le rapport de la couleur, et montre avec quelle puissance d'attrait et de charme Scheffer pouvait pendre s'il le voulait."

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as pilgrim-warriors to the Orient, to there conquer a grave.[1]

A strange time! But after all, are not we mortals all crusaders, who, with all our wearisome combating, at last win for ourselves only a grave?[2]

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[1] As there are eagles of criticism who catch flies by gravely blaming the author for typographical errors, for which proof-readers may perhaps be justly accountable, so Heine here blames the artist for an anachronism which possibly originated in the person who ordered the picture, and who thought to improve on the poet's conception. Thus I have seen certain pictures representing the slaying of the Dragon of Wantley by Moore of Moore Hall, in which the conception of the Percy Ballad was quite ignored, and all made genteelly romantic and mediæval, doubtless in agreement with some ancient legend, but not in accordance with the song which is generally known. There is, in fact, a very ancient mediæval popular ballad in German from which Bürger took his poem, but people will persist in believing that Scheffer should have followed the latter. There is something in all this "genteel refining" and improving which suggests a statue of "Lady Godiva" by an American female artist, in which the subject is not *nude*, but entirely draped. On inquiry, I was told that it represented Lady Godiva *before* her ride.—*Translator.*

[2] "Oh, my young friend, all taps is wanities," and "all is gas and gaiters!" This finding one's way out of a mudhole of a sentence by a sudden flip-flap of a high moral metaphor, not peculiarly appropriate, but sounding grandly, had keenly impressed Dickens. It is now almost peculiar to small clergymen. The blaspheming blossom in the next sentence is a beautiful conception, reminding one of the wild-flowers which the farmer declared "were a *cuss* to the field."

It is amusing to know what was Heine's own honest and original opinion of this mediæval re-cooking of Leonore, and it appeared concisely as follows in the original letter:—

"Scheffer's Leonore, who misses her Wilhelm among the

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I read these thoughts on the noble countenance of the knight who casts from his high horse such a pitying glance on the poor Leonore, who lets her head fall on her mother's shoulder. She is a mourning flower—she will fade but not blaspheme. The Scheffer picture is a beautiful musical composition; the colours resound in it as gaily sad as a melancholy song of spring.

The remaining pictures by Scheffer are not worth notice. However, they attracted much admiration, while many better pictures by less known painters passed unheeded. Of so much avail is the name of a master. When a prince wears a Bohemian glass stone on the finger, it is believed to be a diamond, but if a beggar bore a diamond ring, the world would think it was but worthless glass. This reflection leads me to

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soldiers of the passing army, deserves the *least* attention. The legend is here misplaced into the time of the Crusades, and its costume does not correspond to the character of the incident. This picture has, however, been greatly admired, while others," &c.

But as Heine found that the world worshipped the romantic, mediæval fashionable more than truth, he "went back" on himself and re-dressed his opinion! But he was right at first. The picture *au fond*, as regards *conception*, *is* trash.—*Translator*.

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Horace Vernet,

who has not himself adorned the Exhibition with altogether genuine gems. The most remarkable of his exhibited pictures was a Judith about to slay Holofernes. She—a blooming, slender girl—has just risen from his couch.[1] A violet robe, hastily wound about her hips, descends to her feet; the upper portion of the body is covered by a pale yellow under-garment whose sleeve falls down from the right shoulder, which she tosses again up with the left hand with something of the deliberate preparation of a butcher, and yet daintily enchantingly withal, for in her right she holds the curved sword which threatens the sleeping Holofernes. There she stands, a ravishing creature, who has just stepped over the limit of virginity, divinely pure, and yet stained before the world like a profaned sacramental cup. Her head is delightfully attractive and sweet (*anmuthig*), and uncannily lovely, with black locks like small snakes, which do not flow downward, but rise and rear their heads, giving her a terrible grace. The face is somewhat shadowed, and a sweet ferocity, a gloomy happiness (*düstere*

[1] French version—"Elle vient de quitter sa couche la belle jeune fille à la taille élancée, brillant de tout l'éclat de sa beauté."

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Holdseligkeit), and sentimental rage ripple through the noble traits of the murderous beauty.[1] There sparkle specially in her eyes a sweet cruelty and the lustful joy of vengeance; for she has her own abused body to avenge on the hideous heathen.[2] He is not, in fact, a very handsome man, but he seems to be at bottom *bon enfant* —a good fellow. He is sleeping so good-temperedly in the after-happiness which followed his blissful rapture. He snores perhaps, or, as Louise says, he "sleeps out loud;" his lips twitch as if he were still kissing and he lay in the lap of luxury, or rather as if the luxury

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[1] Here we have our author at full tide of "the ineffable, exquisite, and untranslatable graces" peculiar to his style, owing to the peculiarly attractive naughtiness of the subject. I have heard of a lady who always made it a point at her dinners of coupling clever and stupid, handsome and ugly people—in short, the most striking opposites, with a view to *effect*. As an experiment it was not a success. In like manner, Heine, when he is endeavouring to write æsthetically, and ideas refuse to come, takes refuge in the cheap trick of employing glaring contrasts—as he would say, colours—of adjectives, that is, of coupling unlike conceptions—the *dernier ressort* of "smart" writers, who would fain be original. Of this special flight it may be said that in it the author manifests a red-hot freezingness which indicates with adamantine softness the sable blanchness of his soul.—*Translator.*

[2] "Car elle a aussi son injure à elle, la profanation de son beau corps." When we consider that the whole affair, "profanation" and all, was carefully arranged by Judith herself beforehand, this "injury" reminds us of what is called in French *une querelle d'Allemand.*

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still lay in his; and so, drunk with rapture, and certainly with wine, without passing through torment or illness, Death sends him, by the aid of his most beautiful angel, into the white night of eternal annihilation. What an enviable end! When I die, ye gods, let me die like Holofernes![1]

Was it irony in Horace Vernet that the rising rays of the sun fall on the man about to die, as if transfiguring or glorifying him just as the lamp goes out!

There is another work by the same artist which commends itself less by intellectual conception or *esprit* than by bold drawing and colour. It represents the present Pope. His head crowned with a triple tiara of gold, clad in a gold-embroidered white garment, and sitting on a golden chair, "the servant of the servants of God" is being carried in a procession round the Church of St. Peter. The Pope himself, though ruddy of countenance, looks feeble and almost faded in the smoke of frankincense and the white feather-fans by which he is surrounded. But the bearers of the Papal chair are sturdy men of strong character, in carmine liveries, with black hair falling over brown faces. Only three of them appear, but

[1] The long years of slow pain during which Heine died, as it were, piece by piece, paralytic, blind, and palsied, seem like a terrible sarcasm on this mocking prayer.—*Translator.*

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they are admirably painted; the same may be said of the Capuchins, of whom only the heads, or rather the backs of their broadly tonsured bowed heads, are visible in the foreground. But the vapoury vanishing insignificance of the chief characters and the marked predominance of the accessory figures are a defect in this picture. The ease with which the latter are sketched, as well as their colour, remind me of Paul Veronese. But it lacks the Venetian magic, that poesy of colour which, like the shimmering light of the Lagunes, does but play on the surface, and yet which moves the soul in such a marvellous manner.

As regards bold delineation and vigorous colour, a third picture by Horace Vernet has been greatly admired. It represents the arrest of the Princes Condé, Conti, and Longueville. The scene is the staircase of the Palais Royal at the instant when the men arrested descend, having given up their swords by the order of Anne of Austria. By this series of descent the artist has been able to give every figure in full by itself. Condé is the first on the lower stair; he holds his moustache as if in deep reflection, and I know what he is thinking about. An officer descending from the highest step carries their swords. There are three groups, very naturally placed and in good relation to

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one another. It is only a man who has attained to a very high grade in art who has such ideas as this of the steps.[1]

To the less-known pictures of Horace Vernet belongs a Camille Desmoulins, who stands on a bench in the garden of the Palais Royal and addresses the people. With the left hand he plucks a green leaf from a tree, with the right he holds a pistol. Poor Camille! thy rage was no higher than that bench, and there thou didst remain and look about thee. "Onward, ever onward!" is, however, the magic word which can always sustain the men of Revolution; but should they once pause and look round, then they are lost, like Eurydice when she, following the lyre-tones of her husband, looked back only once into the horrors of the world below.[2] Poor Camille! poor fellow! (*Arme Bursche*). Those were the jolliest freshman years of freedom when thou didst jump upon the bench and smash the windows of despotism, and madest street-lamp jokes. The jokes became dismal in after days; the freshmen (*Füchse*) of the Revolution became

[1] From this passage all is omitted, with the exception of four or five lines, to the next article on Delacroix, from the *Œuvres Complètes de Heinrich Heine.*

[2] *Wie Eurydice, als sie, dem Saitenspiel des Gemahls folgend, nur einmal zurückschaute in die Greuel der Unterwelt.* According to Lemprière and Offenbach, it was Orpheus who looked back to see if Eurydice was following, and so lost her.—*Translator.*

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seniors who saw sights of terror,[1] and thou didst hear awful sounds around thee and behind; from the realm of shadows the spectral voices of the Gironde did call thee, and thou didst look about.

This picture was to a certain degree interesting as regarded the costume of 1789. In it one could still see the powdered wigs, the close dress of the women, which puffed out over the hips; the gaily striped swallow-tail coats, the coachman-like overcoats with many capes, the two watch-chains which hung parallel on either side,[2] and even those Terroristic waistcoats, with wide-spreading flaps, which have again become the fashion among Republican youth in Paris as *gilets à la Robespierre.* Robespierre himself may be seen in the picture, remarkable by his smug toilette and spruce air. In fact, his external appearance was always as neat and bright as a new guillotine, and his heart within was as unselfish, as unassailable

[1] "Die Füchse der Revolution wurden bemooste Häupter, denen die Haare zu Berge stiegen." Long-haired students whose hair stood on end (for fright). A worn-out old university joke. There is in it here an allusion to La Montagne.—*Translator.*

[2] All of these fashions, which were indeed only those of thirty years before, were still to be seen to a certain degree in old-fashioned Philadelphia, and especially in the country, when I was a boy, I having been born in 1824. Very stylish men wore two watches, because very few "tickers" went well, and therefore one served to correct the other. Top-boots, powdered hair and *queues*, steeple-crowned hats, and coats of many capes could be occasionally seen even to 1840.

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and consistent as its axe. This implacable severity was not, however, a want of feeling, but *virtue* like that of Junius Brutus, which our heart condemns and our reason admires with terror. Robespierre even had a particular liking for Camille Desmoulins, whom he had executed when this *fanfaron de la liberté* preached untimely moderation and advocated weaknesses which were dangerous to the state.[1] Perhaps while the blood of Camille ran on the Grève, the tears of Robespierre flowed in a solitary chamber. This is not a mere fancy. A friend told me not long ago that Bourdon de Loïse once related to him, that having gone one day into the study of

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[1] Robespierre and the Terrorists formed, according to Heine, the *advanced* minds of the Revolution; and yet they were in reality the reactionaries who retarded the Republic in France till 1871; which may suggest to all the dynamiters, mill- and car-burners, and murderers of the present day, that in the end they will appèar simply as a dead weight as regards adjusting the relations of Labour and Capital. Should Labour attain all its rights, it will not be by the aid of assassination, destruction of property, or any other crime. This is a point on which Heine frequently touches, and invariably errs. According to him, there were to be necessarily fearful cataclysms of society, endless massacres, much singing of the Marseillaise, trumpeting, and above all, much melodramatic yelling and "action."

When Socialism shall be honestly guided by *Philanthropy*, it will advance rapidly; but at present its chief motive-power seems to be *envy*, with a far greater desire to bring down the lofty than to exalt the lowly. In fact, all the tendencies of all Socialistic writers are to very much degrade man below his

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the Comité du Salut Public, he found Robespierre there all alone, buried in thought, sitting over his Acts and weeping bitterly.

I pass over the other not less important works of Horace Vernet, the versatile artist who paints everything, pictures of saints, battles, still-life, landscapes, portraits, all rapidly, as it were, like pamphlets. I now come to

DELACROIX,

who has contributed a picture before which there was always a crowd, and which I therefore class among those which attracted the most attention. The sacredness of the subject forbids a severe criticism of the colouring, with which fault might otherwise be found. But despite a few artistic defects, there prevails in the picture a great thought, which strangely attracts us. It represents a group of the people during the Revolution of July, from the centre of which—almost

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present average level as regards art, science, and culture. Heine really admired useless, or worse than useless, *notorieties*, who made a show in history, far more than quiet and truly great men. Hence his exaggeration of the greatness of the men of the Revolution, who simply mismanaged everything, so that France returned to military and regal subjection, while England and America, after their great storms, progressed in freedom.—*Translator.*

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like an allegorical figure — there rises boldly (*ragt*) a young woman with a red Phrygian cap on her head, a gun in one hand, and in the other a tricolour flag. She strides over corpses calling men to fight—naked to the hips, a beautiful impetuous body, the face a bold profile, an air of insolent suffering (*frecher Schmerz*) in the features—altogether a strange blending of Phryne, *poissarde*,[1] and goddess of liberty. It is not distinctly shown that the artist meant to set forth the latter; it rather represents the savage power of the people which casts off an intolerable burden. I must admit that this figure reminds me of those peripatetic female philosophers, those quickly-running couriers of love or quickly-loving ones, who swarm of evenings on the Boulevards.[2] And also that the little chimney-sweep Cupid, who stands with a pistol in either hand by this alley-Venus, is perhaps soiled by something else as well as soot; that the candidate for the Pantheon who lies dead on the ground was perhaps selling *contre-marques* yes-

[1] *Poissarde*, a fish-woman; metaphorically, any very insolent and vulgar woman of the street type.

[2] One would certainly have expected that on this sacred subject, if ever, the French version would have risen to the occasion. It modestly confines itself to, "Ces devergondées peripaticiennes dont les essaims couvrent le soir les boulevards." "Quickly-loafing, quickly-loving girls," would be considered a good translation in America.—*Translator.*

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treen at the door of a theatre, and that the hero who storms onward with his gun, the galleys in his features, has certainly the smell of the criminal court in his abominable garments. And there we have it! a great thought has ennobled and sainted these poor common people, this *crapule*, and again awakened the slumbering dignity in their souls.

Holy July days of Paris! ye will eternally testify in favour of the original dignity of man —a dignity which ne'er can be destroyed. He who beheld you grieves no more o'er ancient graves, but, full of joy, believes in the resurrection of races. Holy days of July! how beautiful was the sun and how great the people of Paris! The gods in heaven, who gazed on the great battle, shouted for joy; gladly would they have left their golden chairs and gone to earth to become citizens of Paris.[1] But envious and

[1] This may recall the enthusiastic assertion in an old English song, that—

"Jove and Mars and Mercury, descending from their spheres,
Might join with admiration the British grenadiers."

The Revolution of '48 was, historically or otherwise, fully equal to that of July 1830, and we who fought in it deemed we had done a good three days' work, and perhaps did *not* think small beer of ourselves; but that the gods would have liked to change places with us did not really occur to me at the time. This outburst of Heine's reminds me of the American who was brought to trial (as we indeed might have been) on a charge of assault and battery. But the counsel for the defendant made

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peevish as they are, they feared lest man would bloom too far and too gloriously above them; so they sought, by their ever-willing priests, "to blacken the brilliant and lay the lofty in the dust," and so organised that Claude-Potter animal piece, the Belgian rebellion. Therefore it has been provided that the trees of liberty do not grow quite up to heaven.[1]

There is no picture in the Salon in which colour is so sunk in as in the July Revolution of Delacroix. But just this absence of varnish and sheen, with the powder-smoke and dust which covers the figures as with a grey cobweb, and the sun-dried hue which seems to be thirsting for a drop of water, all gives to the picture a

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up such a righteous record for his client, showing such an unimpeachable character, *et cetera*, that the accused, after listening for a time in utter amazement, at length burst into tears, exclaiming that he did not know before what a noble fellow he was. By the way, I learn with great pleasure from Heine that participation in one of these revolutions absolves a man from all sins committed here on earth below, and opens for him to a certainty the gate of Paradise. The remainder of this high-flown passage is omitted—rather sensibly too—from the French version, which, with all its faults, has sundry merits.—*Translator.*

[1] When this Belgian rebellion broke out, the King manifested the greatest interest in establishing a republic, agreeing cordially with everybody, and only insisting on one condition, viz., that he should receive the first nomination as candidate for Presidency. Monarchy or republic, he was bound to be the first man in it.—*Translator.*

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truth, a reality, an originality in which we find the real physiognomy of the days of July.[1]

Among the spectators were many who had been actors or lookers-on in the Revolution, and these could not sufficiently praise the picture. "*Matin!*" exclaimed a grocer, "these *gamins* fought like giants." A young lady observed that the Polytechnic scholar was wanting, who is invariably found in all pictures of the Revolution of July, of which there were more than forty exhibited. An Alsatian corporal said in German to his comrades, "Isn't painting now a great artificiality? (*Künstlichkeit*). How closely everything is imitated! How naturally that dead man lying there on the ground is painted; one would swear he was alive" (*Man sollte drauf schwören er lebt*).[2]

"Papa," asked a little Carlist girl, "who is the dirty woman with the red cap?" "Well, truly," replied the noble parent with a sweetly subdued smile, "I do not find her so ugly—she looks like the most beautiful of the seven deadly sins." "And she is so dirty!" observed the little one. "Well, it is true, my dear," he

[1] The rest of this article, to the word "Decamps," is wanting in the French version.

[2] The beginning of this episode was struck out of all editions after the first, till it was restored in a note in that of Hoffmann and Campe, 1876.

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answered, "that she has nothing in common with the purity of the lilies. She is the goddess of liberty." "But, papa, she has not on her even a chemise." "A true goddess of freedom, my dear, seldom has a chemise, and is therefore very angry at all people who wear clean linen."

Saying this, he drew his linen sleeve-cuffs still farther over his long idle hands, and said to his neighbour, "Your Eminency, should the Republicans succeed to-day in having some old woman shot by the National Guard at the Porte Saint-Denis, then they would bear the sacred corpse round the Boulevards; the mob would go mad, and we should have a new Revolution."

"*Tant mieux!*" murmured his Eminence, a lean, closely-buttoned man, who was evidently disguised in a worldly garb, as is now done by all priests in Paris out of fear of public reviling, or perhaps from an evil conscience. "*Tant mieux*, Marquis! provided that there only be plenty of horrors, so that the measure may again be filled to overflowing! Then the Revolution will devour its own founders, especially those conceited bankers, who, praise the Lord, have ruined themselves." "Yes, your Eminence, they wished to ruin us *à tant prix*, because we would not receive them in our *salons*. That is the secret of the Revolution of July; and therefore money was distributed in the suburbs, and work-

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men were dismissed from factories, and tavern-keepers were paid who gave away wine gratis to the mob, and who put gunpowder into it to excite them,[1] *et du reste, c'était le soleil.*

It may be that the Marquis was right—it was the sun. Sometimes in the month of July the sun has most powerfully inflamed with its rays Parisian hearts when freedom was threatened, and, drunk with sunlight, the people of Paris rose against the crumbling bastiles and ordinances of serfdom. The sun and the city sympathise wondrously, and love one another. Before the sun of the evening sinks into the sea, her last fond lingering gaze rests with delight on Paris as the bravest of all towns, and she kisses with fleeting rays the tricoloured flag on its towers. Barthelemy, one of the best of French poets, has wisely proposed to celebrate the festival of July by a symbolic wedding, and as the Doge of Venice annually ascended the golden Bucentaur to ally all-conquering Venice

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[1] A widely-spread error. Gunpowder in wine or brandy may sicken men, but it does not stimulate them, though we are assured in the song of the *Constitution* and *Guerrière* that—

"When our frigate hove in view,
Said proud Dacres to his crew:
'Now clear the decks for action, and be handy oh!
To the weather-gage, boys, get her!'
And to make his men fight better,
Gave them to drink gunpowder mixed with brandy oh!"

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to the Adriatic Sea, so should Paris every year be married on the Place de la Bastile to the sun, to the great flaming lucky star of her freedom. Casimir Perier did not relish this proposal; he feared the riotous jollity (*Polterabend*) of such a wedding; he dreaded the all too great heat of such nuptials, and he allowed Paris only a morganatic left-handed marriage with the sun.

But I forget that I am only the reporter of an exhibition. As such, I must now mention a painter who, while attracting general attention, appealed so markedly to me, that his pictures seemed to be like a many-coloured echo of the voice of my own heart, or far more as if the naturally-allied tones[1] of colour in my heart re-echoed wondrous strange.

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[1] *Wahlverwandten*, electively allied. Goethe's great novel is termed *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, or "The Elective Affinities." "Coloured echoes" and "elective voices of colour on the heart" seem to remind us uncomfortably of feverish silly dreams, in which a cat persists in being a Bible in which we read all that which we are actually doing, yet are not quite certain from time to time that a chimney-sweep Mollah is not singing it from a mosque-chimney. But this delirious confusion of ideas, which is deeply pitied when it occurs in the human brain in relation to other subjects, is, as I have effectively remarked, cultivated to excess in art by the æsthetic imitators of Heine.—*Translator.*

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DECAMPS

is the name of the painter who so enchanted me.[1] Unhappily, I have not been able to see one of his best works, the Dog Hospital (*l'Hôpital des Chiens Galeux*). It had been taken away before I visited the Exhibition. Several other excellent works by him escaped me because I could not find them in the vast number[2] of other pictures before they were taken away.

I saw at once that Decamps was a great painter when I first met with a small picture by him, the colour and simplicity of which vividly impressed me. It only represented a Turkish building, high and white, with here and there small windows, out of which peered a Turkish face, while below was a silent water in which the chalk-like walls, with their rosy shadows, mirrored themselves in a marvellous calm.[3] I

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[1] German version—"Decamps heisst der Maler, der solchen Zauber auf mich ausübte." French version—"Decamps est le nom du peintre qui par d'autres moyens, a enchanté les esprits."

[2] "Aus der grossen Menge," which here evidently refers to pictures. In the French version, "parce que la foule m'a empêché des les trouver"—"because the crowd (of people) prevented my finding them."

[3] *Wunderbar ruhig.* Here the simple French version is a little more complete than the original, for it has *une tranquillité endormie.* "Tranquillity gone to sleep" is good, and truly suggestive of all that is *wunderbar ruhig.*

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afterwards learned that Decamps had been in Turkey, and that it was not only his own original colouring which had so much impressed me, but also the truthfulness with which the accurate yet modest colouring is set forth in his pictures of the East. This is strongly marked in his "Turkish Patrol," in which we see the great Hadji-Bey, head of the police at Smyrna, who is going the rounds surrounded by his myrmidons. He sits like a swollen, sponge-bellied old Turk, high on his horse, in all the majesty of his insolence, with an arrogant, stupid, and darkly gloomy face, which is overshadowed or shielded by a high white turban. He holds in his hands the sceptre of absolute bastinadominion, and there run by and before him on foot nine faithful executors of his will—*quand même*—no matter what; fast-hurrying creatures, with short, lean legs, and almost animal faces, cat-like, goatish, ape-like—yes, one of them is a mosaic of dog's nose, pig's eyes, ass's ears, calf's smile,[1] and hare's fright. They carry very carelessly, weapons—

[1] There are subdued murmurs of double meaning, as of one suffering with suppressed puns, all through this passage, but it only breaks out very perceptibly in the "calf's smile," evidently the *ris de veau* joke of our boyhood, but which the complete French version gives with despicable timidity as *rire de veau!* A translator need not go out of his way into high grass to hunt for puns, but when they encounter him on the high-road of the text, he should meet them like a man.—*Translator.*

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pikes, guns, with the butt-ends uppermost, as well as the implements of justice, a long spear for impalement, and a bundle of bamboos. As the houses before which the procession passes are whitewashed, while the soil is yellowish clay, the whole makes an impression as of *ombres chinoises* when we see the dark, droll figures hurrying along the light bright back- and fore-ground.[1] It is clear twilight, and the grotesque dark forms and the lean legs of men and horses add to the oddly (*baroque*) magic effect. And the fellows run, also, with such droll *caprioles*,[2] such unheard-of leaps; even the horse throws out his legs with such eccentric rapidity, that it seems to be half-creeping on its belly, half-flying, and certain critics here have very much abused all that, as unnatural and caricatured.

For France has also its standing and never moving army of art critics, who carp at and condemn, according to old conventional rules, every

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[1] This conclusion is omitted in the French version, which is not noted by the German editor.

[2] According to the complete French version, they are even throwing somersaults—*ces coquins se culbuttent!* I have seen many a police round in the East, "but never aught like this." It would appear as if the artist had confused the performances of the clowns or licensed jesters at marriage and circumcision processions with the grand police patrol. It is not to be wondered at that certain critics found fault with this as "antinaturel et sentant la caricature."—*Translator.*

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new work, its subtle and refined connoisseurs[1] who sniff round in the ateliers, smiling approbation when any one tickles their hobby,[2] and these people have not failed to pass judgment on the picture of Decamps. A Mr. Jal, who publishes a pamphlet on every Exhibition, has, by way of postscript to it, attempted to injure that picture in the *Figaro*, and that he thinks that he has neatly ridiculed the friends of the work when he, with affected modesty, declares that he is "a man who only judges according to reasonable conceptions (*Verstandesbegriffen*), and that *his* poor reason could not see in the Decamps picture that great masterpiece which is beheld by those transcendentalists who do not judge by intelligence or common-sense alone."

The poor, wretched rascal (*Schelm*), with his miserable intelligence or "understanding," he knows not how accurately he condemns himself. Poor understanding or sense (*Verstand*) should never have the first word when works of art are discussed, any more than it was called to take any leading part in their creation. The idea of a work of art is born of the emotions or

[1] I think this was possibly meant originally for *feine Oberkenner*, though the German text gives it as *seine*.

[2] "Wenn man ihre Marotte kitzelt." *Marotte* is a fool's bauble or bobby, and it is not quite impossible that *hobby* is derived from it, and assumed at a later date association with the *hobby-horse*.

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feeling (*Gemüth*), and this demands of free, wild fancy the aid of realisation.[1] Fancy then throws him all her flowers—indeed, almost smothers the idea, and would more probably kill it than give it life, if understanding did not come limping up to put aside or clip away the superabundant blossoms. Understanding or judgment only keeps order, and is, so to speak, the police in the realm of art. In life it is generally a cold calculator who adds up our follies; unfortunately, it is often only the bookkeeper of the bankruptcy of a broken heart.

The great error always exists in or consists of

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[1] *Phantasie*, not *imagination*, as the French version gives it—which is properly *Einbildungskraft*, or the voluntary power of imagining—but the wilder creativeness into which the mind drifts when dreaming. Thus, in English, an imaginative work may be eminently reasonable and common-sensible, but this could hardly be the case were it *fantastic*. *Phantasie* is fancy in its *fullest* sense. I have here translated *Verstand*, apparently inaccurately, as "understanding," "judgment," "intelligence," or "common-sense," because our author uses it in the same irregular manner. Like his followers, the *æsthetes*, Heine professes a great contempt for *Verstand*, or an idea or rational motive in art, in which he is, of course, contradictory to himself, as in all ideas, because in other places he condemns works, however well executed, because they depart from it. The great error of the whole new school is, that art, which is infinite, shall only be guided by caprice, which finds its parallel in the idea that naturalism only means filth. There may be, or is, the purest and noblest ideal art, in which reason prevails, and there may be, again, great art seen staring mad.

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this: that the critic asks, "What should the artist do?" (*Was soll der Künstler?*) It would be much more correct to say, "What does the artist desire?" or even, "What must the artist execute?" The question, What should the artist do? originated with those art philosophers who, without any poetry of their own, abstracted characteristics from different works of art, and from what existed deduced a standard or rule (*Norm*) for all future art, and so established species, definitions, and rules. They did not know that all such abstractions can only be of use to judge of imitations, but that every original artist, and even every new genius in art, should be judged according to his own law of art (*Aesthetik*), which he brings with him. Rules and all such antiquated doctrines are, for such souls, much less applicable. "There are no laws or rules of fencing for young giants," says Menzel, because they break through every parade. Every genius should be studied, and only judged according to what he himself wills or means (*Was er selbst will*).[1] Here we have only to answer the question, "Has he the ability to carry out his idea?" "Has he applied the right

[1] This dogma, that there is no law or limit whatever for genius, which forms the corner-stone of the Heine esthete school, is omitted from the French version.

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means?" Here we stand on firm ground.[1] We measure or decide (*modeln*) no longer, as to the work submitted, according to our own subjective wishes, but we come to mutual intelligence as to the God-given means at the command of the artist for realising his idea. In the recitative arts, these means consist of intonation or sound and words. In the representative arts, they are supplied by colour and form. Sounds and words, colours and forms, that above all which appears to sense,[2] are, however, only symbols of the idea—symbols which rise in the soul of the artist when it is moved by the Holy Ghost of the world;[3] for his art-works are but symbols, by which he conveys his ideas to others. He who expresses the most, and the most significant, with the fewest and simplest symbols, he is the greatest artist.

But I think it attains its highest value when the *symbol*, apart from its inner meaning, delights our senses externally, like the flowers of a *selam*, which, without regard to their secret signification, are blooming and lovely, bound in a bouquet. But is such a concord always possible? Is the

[1] Or rather, here we quit it for a shaky bog of mad caprice and mysticism. "Work submitted," in the next sentence, which might be as well rendered "the matter in hand," is in the original *fremde Erscheinung*, or "foreign phenomenon," our author here becoming transcendental.

[2] *Das Erscheinende.* French version—*le visible surtout.*

[3] *Weltgeist.* Here rather the spirit of the universe.

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artist so completely free in choosing and binding his mysterious flowers? Or does he only choose and bind together what he must?[1] I affirm this question of mystical unfreedom or want of will. The artist is like that *somnambula* princess who plucked by night in the gardens of Bagdad, inspired by the deep wisdom of love, the strangest flowers, and bound them into a *selam*,[2] of whose meaning she remembered nothing when she awoke. There she sat in the morning in her harem,[3] and looked at the *bouquet de nuit*, musing on it as over a forgotten dream, and finally

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[1] "On bien ne fait-il qu'obéir dans cette operation à une puissance *occulte*? Je réponds affirmativement à une pareille question de dependance *mystique*." It will be seen anon that Heine, to bolster up his theory of absolute freedom for the "illuminated," or geniuses, from all moral law or responsibility, is obliged, like all his predecessors, to fall back on supernaturalism, mysticism, and "occult nonsense." Wherein he and all the "heretics" before him were like children, who violently disobey their mother in her absence, and then run to her for protection when startled at the consequences of their own folly. He who departs from material logic has no refuge save in mysticism.—*Translator.*

[2] Salaam, greeting, peace, as in *Salaam aleikūm.*

[3] *Her harem.* So in the original. Heine appears to have been under an impression that a harem was a bedroom. I have heard of an untravelled American who had come strangely to the idea that it meant a hencoop, which is, all things considered, a better guess than the one by our author. It is strange that a writer, while laying down the eternal laws of *im*-morality and free art, should, in the very midst thereof, manifest ignorance as to the nature of such an Oriental institution.—*Translator.*

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sent it to the beloved Caliph. The fat eunuch who brought it greatly enjoyed the beautiful flowers without suspecting their meaning. But Harun al Raschid, the commander of the faithful, the follower of the Prophet, the possessor of the ring of Solomon, he recognised the deep meaning of the beautiful bouquet; his heart bounded with delight, he kissed every blossom, and laughed till tears ran down his long beard.

I am neither a follower of the Prophet nor possessor of the ring of Solomon nor of a long beard, yet I dare assert that I have understood the beautiful *selam* which Decamps brought us from the East far better than all the eunuchs with their Kislar-Aga, the great first connoisseur, the pandering messenger in the harem of Art. The twaddling of such castrated connoisseurship is intolerable to me, especially the traditionary forms of speech, and the well-meant advice to young artists, and even the pitiable referring them to Nature, and always to dear, sweet Nature.

In art I am a supernaturalist.[1] I believe that the artist cannot find all his types in Nature, but

[1] Here we have it at last, as might be expected. And it is difficult to understand how, when a writer has shown himself a thousand times in his works an atheist or generally flippant Voltairean or Nothingarian, he can with any sense or consistency claim to be a supernaturalist or spiritualist in art. Were this all a gigantic joke we could laugh at it. But it has

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that the most significant types are simultaneously revealed in his soul as the inborn symbolism of inborn ideas. A recent professor of æsthetics, who wrote *Italienische Forschungen* (Italian Investigations), has endeavoured to make the old principle of imitating (or conforming to) Nature again palatable by declaring that the creating artist should find all his types in Nature. This æstheticist, while thus setting forth such a fundamental principle for the formative arts,[1] never thought of one of the earliest of them, or architecture, whose types men are now foolishly pretending, to support this doctrine, to find in

been adopted with serious and even enthusiastic admiration by thousands, especially in England, and it may be said to be actually regarded as gospel by all those who accept Rhapsody as a rule in art instead of studying it in its periods of historical development. The man never yet lived whose sole feelings, fancies, and expressions sufficed, independent of all authority and precedent, to properly teach the truth; and yet in England, the home of evolution, we have seen and still see the silliest Rhapsody prevail as the governing principle among the vast majority of amateur students of art. The professor of æsthetics at whom Heine ungratefully sneers in the next sentence was his (and my own) old teacher Friedrich Thiersch, who taught a thoroughly sound and grand eclectic system, based on common-sense, and agreeing on the whole with that of Taine. I earnestly commend the perusal of his *Aesthetik* to all who do not make it a principle to never read a German work of art.—*Translator.*

[1] *Bildenden Künste.* I think it was Hazlitt who first used the word "formative" in English as applied to art. French version—*l'artiste plastique* and *les art plastiques.*

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forest foliage and rocky grottoes, but which most certainly were not thence derived. They did not exist in external Nature, but in the human soul.[1]

The artist may answer the critic who misses Nature in the picture by Decamps, and who blames the manner in which the horse of Hadji Bey throws out his feet and how his people run as unnatural, that he painted it quite accurately according to fairy-tale fancy and to the inner intuition of a vision. Indeed, when dark figures are painted on a light ground, they acquire thereby a visionary appearance; they seem to be loosened from the ground, and therefore *require* to be treated in a less material, more aërial, and fabulous manner.[2] The mixture of animal with human nature in the figures in this picture is, moreover, a motive for extraordinary design, for in such mixture there exists that antique humour which the Greeks and Romans developed in innumerable chimeras such as we see with delight on the walls of Herculaneum and statues of satyrs

[1] And whence did the human soul derive them if not from Nature? Did it evolve them, as the artist did the camel, from the depths of its moral consciousness? To declare that the old Teutonic passionate worship of foliage and trees did not pass into Gothic tracery, or that Egyptian columns are not imitations of lotus réeds, is to deny the plainest and simplest of facts.

[2] That is to say, because the houses are whitewashed the police guard are to be represented as throwing somersaults, or otherwise acting like lunatics and looking like animals!—*Translator.*

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and centaurs. As for the reproach of caricature the artist is perfectly protected by the general agreement of his work, that delicious music of colour which sounds comically yet harmoniously, the magic of his hues. Caricature painters are seldom good colourists on account of that incongruity of mind (*Gemüthszerrissenheit*) which is a condition of their liking for such a style. The mastery of colour springs quite characteristically from the painter's soul, and depends on the simplicity or singleness of his feelings (*Einfachheit*).[1] In Hogarth's original pictures in the National Gallery, there are coloured blurs (*Kleckse*), which seemed to quarrel fiercely among themselves, forming an *émeute* of harsh colours.

I forgot to mention that in this picture by Decamps there are a few young Greek girls unveiled sitting at the window, who see the eccentric *cortège* pass by. Their quietness and beauty form a very charming contrast to it. They do not smile; this impertinence on horseback and the dog-like train of followers running with him[2] is to them a common sight, and by this we feel ourselves more vividly transferred to the native land of barbarism.

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[1] Not *Einheit*. The French version gives this as "l'unité de ses sentiments."

[2] French version—"Et l'obeissance canine qui se culbute tout auprès.' The next passage is omitted in the French.

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Only an artist who is at the same time a citizen of a free city could paint this picture in such genial mood. Any other than a Frenchman would have given the colours more strongly and bitterly; he would have mixed in more Berlin-blue, or at least green-gall, and so the fundamental tone of persiflage would have been lost.[1]

Not to dwell too long on this picture, I pass quickly to another, on which the name

LESSORE

was inscribed, and which attracted general attention by its admirable truthfulness and its luxury of simplicity and modesty. Many stopped, startled, in passing it. It is called "The Sick Brother" in the catalogue. In a poor garret, on a wretched bed, lies an invalid boy, who gazes with imploring eyes at a rude wooden crucifix fastened on the bare wall. At his feet sits another boy with downcast look, mournful and sorrowing. His short jacket and breeches are indeed clean, but much patched and of coarse cloth. The yellow woollen blanket on the bed, and still more the furniture, or rather the want of it, indicate great poverty. The subject is admirably in keeping with the treatment or execution, which chiefly suggests that of the

[1] This paragraph is omitted in the French version.

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beggar-boys of Murillo. There are sharply defined shadows, strong, firm, and earnest sweeps of the brush or touches; the colours, not hastily wiped on, but applied calmly and boldly, are singularly deadened (*gedämpft*), and yet not dull, while the character of the whole is that which Shakespeare characterises as *the modesty of Nature.*' Surrounded by brilliant pictures with magnificently glittering frames, this one was the more striking because its frame was old and the gilding tarnished, quite in accordance with the subject and its treatment. Therefore, being consistent in all its details, and forming a contrast to all round it, this picture made a deeply melancholy impression on all who saw it, filling the soul with that nameless pity which sometimes seizes us when, leaving in good-humour some well-lit hall and cheerful company, we suddenly encounter in the street some wretched, ragged, fellow-creature, who wails with hunger and cold. This picture says much with a few touches, and awakens much more in our soul.

SCHNETZ

is a well-known name. Yet I mention it with less pleasure than that of the preceding, who as yet has been little known in the world of art. It may be that the amateurs who had seen far

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better works by him (than those here exhibited) assigned him a high rank, and I therefore give him in consequence a reserved seat. He paints well, but is not, in my opinion, a good painter.[1] His great picture in the Salon of this year, representing Italian peasants imploring a miraculous cure of the Madonna, has certain admirably executed details; as, for instance, that of a boy afflicted with tetanus (*ein starrkrampfbehafteter Knabe*) is admirably drawn, and great mastery of art reveals itself in technicalities everywhere; but the whole is rather edited than painted, the figures are placed *en scène* with a declamatory air, and there is a want of intuition, originality, and unity. Schnetz has to make too many strokes and touches to express his idea, and then that which he sets forth is partly superfluous. A

[1] Here we have in another form the cheap and easy paradox, the "sable whiteness" which Heine and his admirers have carried to such excess. Sometimes there is a colour of truth in such coupling of contradictions, but often, as in the present instance, they are affected and silly. The error here consists in the writer's jauntily confusing the conception of the *artist* or composer with that of the mere *painter*. Heine here appears to be naïvely unconscious that his objection to Schnetz for wanting congruity or harmonious truth of details is even more applicable to the picture by Decamps. As clever newspaper gossip, such flippancy may be tolerated, but the *Salon* has, in book form, been widely read, and had a great influence not only on many thousands of dabblers in criticism and art, but also on their masters and teachers.—*Translator.*

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great artist may now and then, even like a mediocre brother, give us something bad, but never anything too much.[1] Great tension of effort, a vehement desire may be worthy of respect in an artist of middling ability (*mittelmässigen*), but it is depressing when we perceive it in his work. It is the confidence with which he soars which pleases us so much in the high-flying genius; we are the more delighted with his flight the more we realise the mighty power of his wing, and then our soul darts upward and onward with him into the purest sunlit heights of art. Very different indeed are our feelings as to those theatrical genii or geniuses on whom we can see the wires by which they are drawn up, so that we, apprehending their fall, regard their lofty elevation only with trembling discomfort. I will not say that the wires on which Schnetz soars are too thin, or whether his genius is too heavy. I can only say that, instead of elevating my soul, he depressed it.

Schnetz has, as regards studies and choice of subjects, much in common with a painter who is in consequence often classed or mentioned with him, but who, in the Exhibition of this year,

[1] Thus, in writing, a great artist may commit all sins save those of uselessly repeating ideas or verbal superfluity or being inconsistent, in all of which Heinrich Heine was the chief of sinners.—*Translator.*

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surpassed with few exceptions not only him, but all his art contemporaries, and who, as a testimonial of public recognition of his merit, received in the award of prizes the degree of an officer of the *legion d'honneur*.

LEOPOLD ROBERT

is his name. "Is he an historical or *genre* painter?" I seem to hear from the masters of the guilds of Germany.[1]

Unfortunately, I cannot evade this question. I must once for all come to some understanding as regards this unintelligible expression, in order to avoid great misunderstandings. This distinction between history and *genre* is so bewildering, that one might well believe it was invented by the artists who worked at the Tower of Babel. Yet it is really of much later date. In the earlier stages of (modern) art there was only historical painting, that is to say, scenes from sacred history. After this, men distinctly designated as historical paintings those whose subjects were drawn not only from the Bible and [religious] legends, but also from profane or modern history and ethnic fables of the gods. And this was

[1] *Zunftmeister*. French version—"Syndics-jurés de corporations allemandes."

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done in opposition to representations of ordinary life, which came most commonly from the Netherlands, where the Protestant spirit turned away from both Catholic and mythologic material, there being, perhaps, neither models nor inclination for the latter, and where there were, notwithstanding, many admirable painters wishing for employment, and so many friends of art who gladly purchased pictures. The different developments of familiar life therefore became known as *genres*.

Many painters have very ably depicted the humour of petty domestic life, but, unfortunately, mere technical excellence became the main thing in it all. Yet all these works have for us historic interest; for when we look at the beautiful paintings of Mieris, Netscher, Jan Steen, Van Dow, or Van der Werff, their spirit of the time reveals itself marvellously; we seem to see as through a window into the sixteenth century, and spy unseen the deeds and dresses of the olden time. As regards the latter, Dutch artists were not badly off; the peasants' garb was fairly picturesque; that of the *bourgeoisie* was, as regards the men, a delightful blending of Netherland comfort and Spanish *grandeza*, while with the ladies there was a mixture of gay and bizarre fancies from all the world and native calm repose. Thus *Mynheer* with the Burgundian velvet cloak

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and the chivalric *barett* or cap had in his mouth a clay pipe; while *Myfrow* wore heavy shot-silk training robes of Venetian satin, Brussels lace, African ostrich feathers, Russian furs, Oriental slippers, and held on her arm an Andalusian mandoline[1] or a shaggy brown *Hondchen* or lap-dog of Saardam race. With all this the little negro page in attendance, the Turkish carpet, the gaily coloured parrot, the foreign flowers, and great vases of gold and silver in *repoussé*, cast over the cheese-life of Holland the gleam of an Oriental fairy tale.

When art, after a long sleep, again awoke in this our age, painters were in no small perplexity as regards material. The sympathy for subjects drawn from sacred history and mythology was completely dead in the greater portion of Europe, even in the Catholic countries; and yet our contemporary costume seemed to be too unpicturesque even to depict history or common life itself. Our modern *frock* or dress-coat is really so very prosaic to its very depths, that one can only use it as a caricature in a picture.[2] It is not long since

[1] Query: guitar? The mandoline was specially Italian.

[2] This is a curious illustration of a common object without a really proper name; for *frac* confuses it with frock-coat. Dress-coat is absurd and inaccurate; for which reason the humble slangist, whose vocation in life is to supply the building-stones omitted by lexicographers (and whose reward is contempt), has

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I contended with a philosopher from Berlin, a city in Prussia, who would fain explain to me the mystic meaning of the dress-coat and the natural-historic poetry of its form. So he related the following myth:—"The first man was not indecently undrest, but created sewed up in a night-gown, and afterwards, when woman was made from his rib, there was at the same time a great piece cut out from his garment in front, which was given to Eve for an apron, so that the night-gown, by the cutting out of that piece, became a dress-coat, which found in the feminine apron its natural enlargement (missing portion), or complementary part." In spite of this beautiful origin of the *frack*, and its poetical hints as to the redintegration of the sexes, I cannot think favourably of its form, and as the artists agree with me in this respect, they have looked elsewhere for picturesque costumes.[1]

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sought to make good the deficiency by calling the garment "a swallow-tail" and "a steel-pen," either of which terms is more sensible and definite than "dress" or "evening" coat. The following passage relative to the myth of the *frack* was in the first edition, but subsequently omitted, and then restored in a footnote in the edition of 1876. It is wanting, of course, in the complete French version.—*Translator.*

[1] Until of comparatively recent years, the *frack*, as old numbers of the *Fliegende Blätten* indicate, was a distinctive attribute of the German nobility, who wore it "habitually," that is, all the time. Hence the anecdote of a young lady of ducally

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The predilection for ancient historical subjects has been by this greatly heightened, and we find in Germany a whole school, which certainly does not lack talent, but which is unweariedly occupied in clothing the most everyday of modern men with the most everyday feelings in the wardrobe of the Catholic and feudal Middle Age, in cowls and coats of mail.

Other painters have had recourse to other expedients, and chose for models populations from which progressive civilisation has not stripped their originality or national garb. Therefore the scenes from the Tyrolese mountains, which we so often see in the pictures of Munich artists. This mountain country lies near, and the costume of its inhabitants is more picturesque than that of our dandies. Hence those gay pictures of popular Italian life, which is also near to most

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aristocratic family, who was fully persuaded with Van Manteuffel that "humanity, properly speaking, begins with the rank of Count." To her it happened, while swimming in a stream, to be carried away by a terrible rapid far down into a river. A handsome young peasant, who was quite unclad, or *in puribus*, about to dive, seeing the damsel drift by screaming for aid, plunged in, and, at great risk of his own life, brought her safely ashore. Thrilled with astonishment at the bold deed, and not supposing that a man of rank could ever be under any circumstances without a dress-coat, the *Freifräulein* exclaimed, as she gazed admiringly at the dripping Antinous, "*So nobel—und doch kein Frack!*" (So noble—and yet no dress-coat!), which is now a common proverb in Bavaria.—*Translator.*

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artists when in Rome, where they find that ideal nature, and those primevally ancient human forms and picturesque costumes, for which their artist souls yearn.

Robert, a Frenchman by birth, and an engraver in his youth, subsequently lived many years in Rome, and the pictures which he has this year exhibited belong to the same *genre* or kind of which I speak, that is, representations of popular Italian life. "Therefore only a genre-painter," I hear one of the German guild-masters cry, and I indeed know a lady historical-painter who quite turns up her nose at Robert. Yet I cannot quite assent to the term, because there is no longer any historical painting, in the old sense of the word. It would be too vague should one claim this term for all pictures which express a deep thought, the end of which would be a quarrel over every picture as to whether it had any thought in it, the result of all the dispute being only a word. If it should be applied, in its most natural and obvious sense, to representations of the world's history, the term "historical painting" would be approximate to a kind which is now extremely exuberant, and whose growth is seen in the masterpieces of Delaroche.

But before I particularly discuss the latter, I would devote a few words to the pictures of Robert. They are, as I have said, all Italian

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scenes, and such as bring before us most wondrously the loveliness of this land. Art, which was so long the ornament of Italy, is now the cicerone of its magnificence; the speaking colours of the painter reveal to us its most mysterious charms; an ancient magic works again in us, and the land which once subdued us by its weapons, and later by its words, now conquers us by its beauty. Yes, Italy will ever rule our souls, and painters like Robert chain us again to Rome.

If I am not mistaken, "The Pifferari" of Robert, which has been exhibited this year, is already known in lithograph to the public. It represents those pipers from the Albanian mountains who come at Christmas to Rome to play a holy serenade before the images of the Virgin Mary. This work is better designed than painted; there is in it something stiff, harsh, and Bolognese, like a coloured engraving. And yet it moves the soul as if one heard the simple touching pious music as piped by those Alban mountain shepherds.

Less simple, yet perhaps deeper in feeling, is another picture by Robert, in which one sees a corpse which, uncovered according to Italian custom, is being borne to the grave by the *Misericordia* or Brotherhood of Pity. These, masked in black, or in a long black flowing cap in which are only two holes for the eyes, which

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glare out in an unearthly manner, march along like an array of spectres. On a bench in the foreground before the spectator sit the father, mother, and younger brother of the deceased. The old man, poorly clad, deeply grieving, with sunk head and folded hands, sits between the wife and boy.[1] He is silent, for there is no greater grief in this world than that of a father when he, against the wont of Nature, survives his child. The sallow, pale mother seems to lament in despair. The boy, a poor dull creature, has a crust in his hand, and would eat, but relish is wanting on account of unconscious sympathetic grief; therefore his mien is the more mournful. The dead seems to have been the eldest son, the support and ornament of the family, the Corinthian column of the house, as yet fair with youth and grace, who lies almost smiling on the bier, so that in the picture life seems gloomy, ugly, and dreary, while death is infinitely beautiful and amiable and almost laughing.

But the painter who so beautifully transfigured death has set forth life with far greater magnificence, for his great masterpiece, "The Harvesters," is as it were the apotheosis of exist-

[1] Heine also adds that he is "in the middle between," &c., which is omitted in the French version. He also appears to have been the central figure.—*Translator.*

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ence, at the sight of which we forget that there is a realm of shades, and doubt whether it is anywhere more glorious or brighter than on this earth. "The earth is heaven and men are holy, yea, deified." That is the great revelation which gleams with happy colours from this picture.[1] The Parisian public has received this painted evangel far more favourably than if St. Luke had delivered it. In fact, the Parisians have a much too unfavourable prejudice against the latter.

In the picture of Robert we see a desert place in La Romagna in the most glaring of Italian sunsets. The centre of the composition is a peasant's cart, drawn by two immense buffaloes harnessed with heavy chains, and filled with a family of peasants who are about to halt. To the right hand sit reaping-girls by their sheaves resting after their work, while a bagpiper plays and a merry fellow dances to the sound, glad at heart, and it seems as if we heard—

"Damigella, tutta bella,
Versa, versa il buon vino!"[2]

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[1] The remainder of this passage is wanting in the French version.

[2] "Maiden, all beautiful,
Pour, pour the good wine!"

In the French version the same line is given as "Versa, *veras in* bel vino!"—perhaps a vinous confusion with *in vino veritas!* —*Translator.*

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There come to the left also women with sheaves of fruit, young and beautiful, flowers loaded with ears of corn, and then two young harvesters, one of whom totters along as if yearning voluptuously with his eyes cast down to the ground, while the other with uplifted sickle utters a cry of joy. Between the two buffaloes stands a sturdy brown-chested fellow, who seems to be only a servant, and who takes a nap while standing.[1] Up on the cart at one side the grandfather lies, softly bedded, a mild and worn-out old man, yet one who perhaps mentally directs the family vehicle; on the other side we see his son, a bold, calm, manly person, seated, with his legs crossed, on the back of a buffalo, bearing a whip, the visible sign of a ruler. Somewhat higher, almost sublime, rises his beautiful young wife, a child on her arm, a rose with a bud, while near her stands an equally fresh and beautiful youthful form—probably her brother—who is unfolding the canvas on the tent-pole. As this picture will soon be engraved, as I hear, and perhaps travel as a copperplate to Germany, I will spare myself further description.

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[1] *Um stehend Sieste hält.* In the French version—"et se repose sur le timon," which is much better than the original, which rather suggests the Dutchman's obstinate hen who sat on her eggs while standing up.—*Translator.*

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But an engraving will not, any more than a description, give the real charm of the work, which lies in the colour. The figures, all darker than the background, are so divinely, so marvellously lighted by the reflection from the sky, that they gleam of themselves in gayest, gladdest hues, though all the outlines are severely given. Some of the figures seem to be portraits. But the painter has not, in the idiotically honourable (*dümmhrlichen*) fashion of many of his colleagues, painted after Nature, and copied faces with diplomatic accuracy, but, as a clever friend remarked, Robert first took into his heart (*Gemüth*) the forms which Nature gave, and, as souls do not lose in purgatory their individuality, but their earthly dross, ere they rise beatified to heaven, so are those forms so purified in the glowing depth of flames of the artist's *feeling*, that they rise glorified and evangelised to the heaven of art, where eternal light and endless beauty reign, where Venus and Mary never lose their worshippers, where Romeo and Juliet never die, where Helen is immortally young, and Hecuba, at least, never grows old.[1]

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[1] The extraordinary *naïveté* of the remark that some of Robert's faces appear to have been copied from life, which sounds like that of an infant schoolboy ignorant alike of studios and models, is only paralleled by what follows, in which

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In the method of colour in Robert's picture we recognise the study of Raphael, and the architectonic beauty of the grouping also recalls the latter. There are, too, certain forms, such as that of the mother and child, which resemble figures by Raphael, and that in his earliest spring-time, when he reflected the severe type of Perugino with tolerable truth, but gently and gracefully softened.

It would never occur to me to draw comparisons between Robert and the great painter of the great Catholic era, but I cannot refrain from recognising their relationship. And yet it is only a material affinity of form, and not a spiritual relationship. Raphael is utterly imbued with Catholic Christianity, a religion which expresses the conflict of soul with matter, which has for object the suppression of matter, which calls every protest of the latter a sin, and which would spiritualise the earth, or rather sacrifice earth to heaven. But Robert belongs to a race

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Heine speaks of this artist as if he were actually the first, or only one, or one most original and peculiar in idealising or improving his models! Truly, if the artist's soul is like purgatory, that of Heinrich Heine might be compared to the *Limbo Patrum*, which was tenanted chiefly by the souls of babes, and *au reste* by all kinds of old heathens, goblins, and other odd fish, "ower bad for blessing, and ower gude for banning."—*Translator.*

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in which Catholicism is extinguished.[1] For, to say it by the way, the expression that Catholicism is the religion of the majority of the people is only a French compliment (*galanterie*) to Notre Dame de Paris, who, on her side, wears with equal politeness on her head the tricolour of freedom—a double hypocrisy, against which the rough multitude protested rather informally when it lately demolished churches and set the saints a swimming in the Seine. Robert is a Frenchman,[2] and he, like most of his fellow-countrymen, cherishes unconsciously a still disguised doctrine which will know nothing of the battle between spirit and matter, which does not forbid to man the certain pleasures of earth, and, on the contrary, promises him all the more heavenly enjoyments in mere moonshine (*ins Blaue hinein*), but which would much rather make man happy here on earth, and regards the

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[1] French version—"Chez lequel le catholicisme est, sinon mort, du moins très-avancé dans son agonie."

[2] According to Heine himself ("Letters from Paris," vol. ii. xxxv.), Robert was a Swiss, "brought up in severe Swiss Protestantism—while as regards anything like immorality, it could not be mentioned in connection with his name!" But it may be that between 1830 and 1841 our author acquired additional information as to Robert. Every doctrine, good or bad, has its *cant*, and here Heine gives us the twaddle and cant of "rehabilitation" and Hellenism to excess.

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sensual world as holy as the spiritual; "for God is all that there is."

Robert's "Harvesters" are, therefore, not only sinless, but they know no sin; their earthly, daily work is piety; they pray continually without moving their lips; they are blest without heaven, atoned for without sacrifice, pure without constant ablution, and altogether holy. And as we see in Catholic pictures the heads alone, as the seat of the soul, radiating the aureole or symbol of spiritualisation, so, on the contrary, we behold in the work by Robert matter sanctified, since here the entire man, body as well as head, is surrounded by heavenly light as by a glory.

But Catholicism is not only extinct in modern France; it has not here even a reactionary influence on art, as in our Protestant Germany, where it has regained a new value by the aid of poetry, which always embellishes the ruins of the past. It may be that there is in the French a sullen spite which disgusts them with Catholic tradition, while a deep interest manifests itself in them for all other historical subjects. I can prove the remark by a fact which in turn is explained by the remark itself. The number of pictures representing Christian subjects drawn from the Bible or from religious legends is so insignificant in this year's Exhibition that many a subdivision of a secular motive con-

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tains many more and far better pictures. After counting accurately, I find among the 3000 numbers in the catalogue, only twenty-nine such religious pictures, while there are thirty representing scenes from Walter Scott's novels. I can, therefore, when I speak of French painting, not be misunderstood when I use the expressions "historical painting" and "historical school" in their most natural meaning.

Delaroche

is the leader of such a school. This painter has no great predilection for the past in itself, but for its representation, for the illustration of its spirit, and for writing history in colours. This inclination manifests itself among most French artists. The Salon was full of scenes from history, and the names Devéria, Steuben, and Johannot deserve the most distinguished consideration.[1] There is also such a tendency in the sister arts, especially in the poetic literature of the French, which Victor Hugo cultivates in the most brilliant manner. The latest advances of the French in the science of history, and their

[1] The remainder of this passage is wanting in the French version.

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vast contributions to the practical writing thereof, are consequently no isolated phenomena.

Delaroche, the great historical painter, has exhibited this year four works, the subjects of two of which are drawn from French history, and the other two from that of England. The former are small, such as are called cabinet pieces,[1] and very rich in figures and picturesque. One represents Cardinal Richelieu, "who, while dying, ascends the Rhone in a boat, to which is attached another in which are Cinq Mars and De Thou, whom he is taking to Lyons, to there have them beheaded." The conception of the boats which thus follow one the other is indeed inartistic, but it is here treated with great skill. The colour is brilliant, almost dazzling, and the figures seem to swim in the golden purple of the setting sun. This splendour contrasts strangely with the fate impending over the three leading figures. The two blooming youths are being taken to execution, and that by a dying old man.[2] Gaily adorned as these boats may be, they row into the shadowy realm of death. The glorious, golden gleaming of the sun is but a signal that he must be gone. 'Tis evening, and ere long he

[1] French version—*tableaux de chevalet*, "easel pictures," as artists say, such as may be easily carried.—*Translator.*

[2] This sentence is omitted in the French version.

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must descend, leaving a blood-red strip along the earth, and it and all things vanish in the night!

Not less brilliant in colour, nor less tragic in significance, is the historical companion piece, which also represents the last hour of Cardinal de Mazarin. He lies in a splendid bed of state, amid a splendid surrounding of gay courtiers and domestics, who gossip, play cards, and stroll about the hall, all people in sparkling, shifting colours, useless, superficial creatures, especially useless for a dying man. They wear fine costumes of the time of the Fronde, not as yet overloaded with gold tassels, embroidery, ribbons, and laces as came to pass later in the gorgeous time of Louis XIV., when the last knights changed themselves into frivolous courtiers, just as the two-handed sword of battle refined itself and diminished into a silly court rapier. The costumes of the picture of which I speak are as yet simple; coat and collar (*justaucorps et la gorgerette*) still recall war, the original occupation of the nobility, even the feathers on the hats are stiff and boldly set, and do not bend to every court wind. The hair of the men flows in natural curls upon their shoulders, the ladies wear the witty *frisure à la Sévigné*. The dress of the latter indicates, however, a transition to the long trailing skirts and wide-bagging tastelessness of the later time. But the corsets or

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bodices have still a charm of naïve neatness, and snowy splendours burst forth from them like blossoms from a cornucopia. They are, one and all, pretty women in this picture, all pretty *masques de cour*, laughing love in their faces, and perhaps grim sorrow in their hearts, with lips innocent as flowers, and perhaps evil little tongues lurking behind like cunning serpents.[1] At the left side of the sick-bed sit three of these dames gossiping and whispering, and near them an acutely listening, keen-sighted priest with a crafty nose. At the right are three chevaliers and a lady playing cards, probably at lansquenet, a good game, at which I once won six thalers in Göttingen. A noble courtier in a dark violet velvet dress with a red cross stands in the centre, making, with much scraping of the foot, a bow.[2] To the right hand of the picture pass two ladies of the court and an abbé, who gives to one a paper, possibly a sonnet of his own composition, while he glances at the other, who plays dexterously with her fan, an airy telegraph of love. The two ladies are charming creatures, one like a rose in an aurora glow, the other yearning in twilight like a long-

[1] *Latet anguis in herba.* A very pretty adaptation of the old simile of the snake in the grass.—*Translator.*

[2] "Et fait la révérence la plus belle et la plus pliée." The French version of this whole description is naturally superior to the German original.—*Translator.*

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ing star (*vaporeusement pâle comme une étoile amoureuse*). In the background are seated court servants, who chatter, and perhaps confide great petticoat state secrets (*Staastsunterocksgeheimnisse*), or bet that Mazarin will be dead in an hour. He indeed seems to be near his end; his face is pale as a corpse, his glance failing, his nose becoming dangerously sharp; little by little there is being extinguished in him that painful flame which we call life. All grows dark and cold within him; the flap of the dark wing of the angel of death [1] is even now felt on his forehead, and at this instant the lady who is playing near by turns to him, and showing him her cards, asks him whether she shall trump with her heart?

The two other pictures of Delaroche set forth subjects from English history. They are of life-size, and more simply painted. One represents the two young princes in the Tower, who were murdered by command of Richard III. The young king and his younger brother are seated

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[1] "The fever called living
Is over at last."—*Edgar A. Poe.*

"The angel of death
Flaps his wings o'er the grave."
—*Karamsin, translated by Bowring.*

I do not believe that there was any borrowing whatever from any one in these two instances, but the close collocation of the similes is a "coincidental curiosity."—*Translator.*

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on an antique bed, while their little dog, running to the door of the prison, seems to announce by his barking the coming of the murderers. The king, who is between boyhood and youth, is a very touching figure. A captive king, as Sterne so truly felt, is in himself a melancholy idea, and here the sufferer is an innocent boy, given over helpless to treacherous murder.[1] Although so young, he seems to have suffered much; there is a tragic dignity in his pale, sickly face, and his legs, which hang down with their long, blue velvet peaked shoes from the couch, yet do not reach the ground, give him a shattered look as of a broken flower. It is all, as I said, very simple, and therefore the more impressive. Ah! it moved me the more deeply, because I found in the face of the unfortunate prince the dear friendly eyes which so often smiled on me, and were so dearly allied to still more loving eyes. When I stood before the picture of Delaroche, it kept returning to my mind how I once, in a beautiful castle in dear Poland, also was before the portrait of a friend, and conversed with his sweet, lovely sister, and how her eyes mysteriously recalled those of the friend. We also spoke of the painter of the picture, who died not long before,

[1] This remark, and also the conclusion of the passage, or about thirty lines, are wanting in the French version.

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and how all people pass away, one after the other. Ah! the dear friend is himself dead, shot by Prague; the lovely lights of the beautiful sister are also extinguished; their castle is burned down, and an agony of desolation seizes on me when I reflect that not only do our beloved ones vanish so quickly from the world, but that no trace remains even of the scene where we once lived with them; it is as if nothing of it had ever existed, and all was an idle dream.

And yet the other picture of Delaroche awakens still more painful feelings. It is a scene from English history, and from that terrible tragedy which has been translated into French,[1] and, causing many tears to flow on both sides of the Channel, has also deeply moved German spectators. We see on the canvas the two heroes of the play, one as a corpse in a coffin, the other in abounding strength of life, and lifting the coffin-lid to look at the dead enemy. And after all, instead of being the heroes themselves, are they not merely actors to whom the Director of the world assigned their parts, and who, without knowing it, act in tragedy two warring principles? I will not name them here, these two

[1] As it is barely possible that some reader may miss the point, I would here say that the translation referred to is that of the idea of decapitating a king.—*Translator.*

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inimical principles, the two great thoughts which contended perhaps in the soul of God while creating the world, and which we here see opposed in this picture, the one shamefully wounded and bleeding in the person of Charles Stuart, the other bold and victorious in that of Oliver Cromwell.

In one of the twilight, sombre rooms of Whitehall, the coffin of the decapitated king stands on dark-red velvet chairs, and before it a man who lifts the lid with steady hand and quietly gazes on the corpse. That man stands there all alone; his form is broad and sturdy, his attitude careless, his countenance that of an honest farmer. His costume is that of a common soldier, puritanically plain; a long hanging waistcoat of dark-brown velvet, under it a jacket of yellow leather; jack-boots, which rise so high that the black breeches are hardly visible; a soiled yellow sword-belt, from which depends a sword with basket-hilt (*Glockengriff*); on the closely-cropped hair a hat with rolled-up rim and a red feather; on the neck a small white rolling collar, beneath which a little armour is visible; dirty tawny gloves, and in the hand which is by the sword-hilt is a short walking-cane; the other holds the lifted lid of the coffin in which the king lies.

The dead have always an expression of countenance which makes them seem superior to the living who are about them, for they always sur-

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pass us in aristocratic indifference to passion, coldness and calm. Men realise this, and therefore the sentinels present arms out of respect to the higher rank of death when a corpse is carried by, though it be only that of the poorest tailor (*Flickschneider*). Therefore it is intelligible that Oliver Cromwell appears unfavourably as regards the dead king. The latter transfigured and refined from the martyrdom which he has endured, hallowed by the majesty of misfortune, the precious purple circlet on his neck, the kiss of Melpomene on his white lips, forms a lofty and crushing contrast to the rude and vigorously vital Puritan. And the external garb of the latter contrasts significantly and sharply with the last traces of splendour and of fallen dignity—the rich green silk cushions in the coffin, the delicacy of the dazzling white shroud, adorned with Brabant lace.

What a great, what a general grief the painter has here expressed with a few touches! There lies miserably bleeding the splendour of royalty, once the comfort and glory of mankind. The life of England has since then become pallid and grey, and poetry in terror fled the soil which she erewhile had decked with her gayest colours.[1]

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[1] Where then did it take refuge? *De gustibus non est*—but, like Meister Trongemund, to whom two-and-seventy lands were

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How deeply did I feel this when I once at midnight passed the fatal window of Whitehall and the modern damp and cold prose of England froze through my veins! But why was not my soul moved with the same feelings when I lately passed for the first time the terrible spot where Louis XVI. died? I believe it was because the latter, when he perished, was no longer king, because his crown had fallen ere he lost his head. But Charles the First lost his crown with his head. He believed in this crown in his own absolute right; he fought for it like a knight, brave and tall; he died nobly proud, protesting against the legality of his court, a true martyr to royalty by the grace of God. The poor Bourbon did not deserve such fame; his head had already been unkinged before his death by a Jacobin

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known, I too have lived long in divers countries, and found in England more deeply-seated poetry, beauty, romance, and material for art than in any other place on earth; a great truth which is not known or felt as it should be even to or by all English people. That Heine knew next to nothing at all of it was his misfortune, but that he must needs keep hammering abusively at it in all his works was his fault—*maxima culpa*. I have seen an American poet and scholar pause as if overawed before Whitehall when I told him what the building was, and *he* assuredly was not chilled with a sense of excessive prosiness and the stupidity of modern English times, as was Heine, with whom the elevation of the mountain only served to remind him of the flatness of the plains or the depth of the valleys below.—*Translator*.

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cap; he no longer believed in himself; he firmly believed in the competence of his judges; he only asserted his innocence; he was really citizen-like virtuous, a good, not very lean, family father; his death has rather a sentimental than a tragic character; he reminds us too much of the German family romances of Augusta Lafontaine. . . . A tear for Louis Capet, a laurel for Charles Stuart.[1]

"Un plagiat infame d'un crime étranger," are the words with which the Viscount Chateaubriand characterised that sad event which took place January 21 on the Place de la Concorde. He proposes to erect on this place a fountain, the water of which shall play forth from a basin of black marble in order to wash away—"but you well know what I mean," he adds pathetically and mysteriously.[2] The death of Louis XVI. is above all things the parade-horse decked with black crape on which the noble Viscount specially prances; he works up (*exploitieret*) by the

[1] Therefore, by all the laws of human nature and of sentiment, one should have felt poetically inspired before Whitehall, and prosaically inclined in the Place de la Concorde. Truly there is great lack of logic here! All that follows for three pages, or until the words, *On ne peut guère nier*, is omitted in the French version.

[2] An abstract, as worded, from a German student ballad—

"Neunmal eins sind neune,
Ihr wisst wohl was ich meine,
Es geht ein Sauf-comment," &c.

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year and day the heavenly ascension of the son of St. Louis; and yet even the refined venomous scantiness with which he declaims, and his oft-repeated sorrowful sallies, indicate no real sorrow. It is most annoying when his words echo from the hearts of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, when the old emigrant coteries with hypocritical sighs wail away there over the death of Louis XVI. as if it belonged peculiarly to them, or as if they were specially privileged to mourn his loss. And yet this death was a general grief for all the world, which concerned the smallest daily labourer as well as the highest master of ceremonies in the Tuileries, and one that must inspire every feeling human heart with infinite sorrow. Oh, the fine family party! since they can no longer usurp our most legitimate pleasures, they arrogate unto themselves our most legitimate pains.[1]

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[1] This indignation of the Royalists at the "common people" because the latter mourned the death of the King reminds us of the small boy who, when his grandmother died, was very angry at another boy from the neighbourhood whom he found at the obsequies weeping for the deceased. It is true that our author wished to establish that it was everybody's funeral, where all had a right to lament, and that as there were a vast number of respectable *bourgeois* who deeply mourned the execution, the aristocracy committed a fatal error in manifesting in many ways that they considered that they alone were aggrieved by it. In which (as in the American war) they suffered petty vanity to blind them to great vital interests.

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It is now, perhaps, the proper time to vindicate on one side the general right of the people to such regret, so that they may not be persuaded that such a right does not belong to them, but to a few chosen ones who have the privilege to bewail that disaster as their own; and, on the other, it is the time to give such utterance to such grief, because there are certain cold crafty state investigators, or sober Bacchantæ of reason, who in their logical delusion would argue away from the depths of our hearts all the respect and honour which the ancient sacrament of royalty demands. However, we do not call the sad cause of those sorrows a plagiarism, much less a crime, and least of all infamous; we call it a dispensation of God. It would be putting men too high or degrading them too deeply to attribute to them so giant-like a power, and so much insanity as to believe that they had of their own free will spilled that blood, the traces of which Chateaubriand would fain wash away with the water of his black basin.

In fact, when we consider the circumstances of those times and the confessions of still living witnesses, we ascertain how little free human will there was at the execution of Louis XVI. Many a man who meant to vote against death did the contrary when he mounted the tribune, and was seized by the dark delusion of political

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despair. The Girondists felt that they were at the same time pronouncing their own death-sentence. Many of the speeches made at this time only served for self-delusion. The Abbé Sieyes, disgusted by repulsive gossip, simply voted for death, and as he descended from the tribune, said, "J'ai voté la mort sans phrase."[1] Malice misused this private expression; the terrible formula *la mort sans phrase* was attributed as parliamentary to the mildest men; now

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[1] There is a very curious American juryman's expression by which this may be exactly rendered, "I voted for death *straight*," *i.e.*, without reserve, change, or circumlocution. A straight ticket, or a straight price in purchasing, means that which is announced, without any alteration, deduction, or discount. It is derived from following the list or "straight series" of names on a ballot.

Our author here leaves out of sight, as do most historians, the fact that revolutions or great political changes are frequently, if not generally, effected by a minority as regards numbers, though by a majority or preponderance of will, courage, and resolution. There would never have been a revolution in England or France, or perhaps a brave war anywhere, could a fair vote have been taken on it beforehand by the farmers and shopkeepers, or the timid citizens and women, who dislike social disturbance. Even the American war of emancipation was carried through by only *one-third* of the entire population, that is, the Republicans, opposed to the Democrats and Secessionists, who were virtually agreed. Heine is right according to the *letter* in saying there was very little free human will as regarded the execution of Louis XVI., if a mere vote is implied, but in reality nearly all the free will or mental vigour in the country was employed in carrying it out.—*Translator.*

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it is in all schoolbooks, and the young get it by heart. As I am generally assured, alarm and grief prevailed on the 21st of January in all Paris; even the most raging Jacobins seemed to be oppressed by suffering discontent. My usual hackney-coachman, an old *sans-culotte*, told me that when he saw the King executed, he felt "as if he himself had had a limb sawed off!" He added, "I felt sick, and had all that day a disgust for food." And he also thought that "Old Veto looked very restless, as if he would defend himself." It is certain that he did not die so grandly as Charles I., who first calmly delivered his long speech of protest, in which he showed such presence of mind as to several times request the nobles who stood about not to feel the edge of the axe lest they should blunt it. The mysteriously masked headsman of Whitehall had a far more terribly poetical effect than Samson with his bare face. Court and hangman had let the last mask fall, and it was a prosaic play. Louis would perhaps have delivered a long Christian address of forgiveness had not the drum been so violently beaten at the first words, that his declaration of innocence was hardly heard. The sublime words of exhortation to a heavenly journey, "Fils de Saint Louis, monte au ciel!" were not spoken at all on the scaffold; they do not suit the sober work-day character of

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the good Edgeworth, to whom they are attributed, and they are the invention of a journalist, then of Paris, named Charles Hiss, who printed them the same day. Such correction is of course quite useless; these words are now in every compendium, they have long since been learned by heart, and the poor school-children must now learn into the bargain that they were never spoken.[1]

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[1] Is this negation in itself *absolutely true* and *perfectly* confirmed? The assertion by Heine that "the good Edgeworth" was too prosaic to have invented the words, proves nothing whatever, and looks as if better proof is wanting. Edgeworth *alone* could have completely disproved the assertion. There is, in fact, *no proof* of the denial. I call attention to this, because there is at present very generally prevalent among writers on history, and especially on archæology, and most of all in folk-lore, a very general disposition to deny not only *all* tradition or transmission, but all theories and principles inherited from the past, without sufficient reason or proof, and to accept all such assertions with childish eagerness.

The last application which I have found of the words themselves is of a very serio-comic nature. It is the custom even to-day in Sicily to make what are virtually *saints* of all murderers who have been executed for crime, but who confessed and were duly oiled before execution. To these infernal wretches there is a church specially dedicated in Palermo, where people go to pray to them as to God. A priest named the Rev. Fortunato Mondello has, in a volume of "Sacred Discourses," greatly praised this sanctification of assassins; there being, as he declares, something exquisitely tender and beautiful in "giving to these pilgrims of eternity, when about to rise to heaven, the refreshment of that sublime word, 'Sons of penitence, fly, fly to glory!'" (*Vide* G. Pitré, *Tradizioni Popolari*

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It cannot be denied that Delaroche, by exhibiting this picture, intended to call forth historic comparison, and parallels are therefore drawn between Cromwell and Napoleon as between Louis XVI. and Charles I. Yet I venture to say that injustice is done to both when they are thus compared. For Napoleon kept himself free from the worst blood-guiltiness (the execution of the Duke of Enghien was only secret murder),[1] but Cromwell never sank so low as to let himself be anointed by a priest as emperor, and, as a renegade son of the Revolution, cajole the Church for the crowned cousinship of the Cæsars. There is a blood-spot in the life of the one, and an oil-spot on that of the other. But both were conscious of a secret guilt. For Bonaparte, who might have become the Washington of Europe, and was only its Napoleon, was never at his ease in the imperial purple mantle. Freedom haunted him like the ghost of a murdered mother; he heard her voice everywhere, even by night; she tore him from the arms of the espoused legitimacy; she frightened

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Siciliane, vol. xvii., Palermo, 1889). One may search in vain among the heathen of ancient or modern times for such a degradation or perversion of religion as this.—*Translator.*

[1] This clause does not occur in the French version, and there are in the latter, in this passage, other omissions and variations.

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him from bed,[1] and then he was seen running hurriedly in the echoing halls of the Tuileries, and when he came pale and weary in the morning into the State Council, he complained of idéologie, and still idéologie—this very dangerous idéologie—and Corvisart shook his head.

When Cromwell, likewise, could not sleep in peace, and wandered in anxious distress in Whitehall, it was not, as pious cavaliers deemed, a bloody royal spectre which pursued him, but dread of the bodily revengers of his guilty deed; he feared the real poniards of his foes, and therefore always wore a coat of mail under his jerkin, and became ever more distrustful; and finally, when the pamphlet appeared, entitled, "Killing no Murder," he never smiled again.

But if the comparison of the Protector and the Emperor offers few points of resemblance, the gain is all the greater in the parallels between the errors and failings of the Stuarts and of the Bourbons, and between the restorations in both countries. It is almost one and the same story of rapid ruin. There is even the same quasi-legitimacy in the new dynasty as there was once in England. For, as before, the holy weapons are

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[1] "Elle l'arrachait pleni d'effroi des bras de la légitimité qui était venue partager sa couche." There is obviously an error or omission here in the German text. — *Translator.*

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again smithed in the furnace of Jesuitism; the Church, away from which is no eternal happiness, sighs and intrigues for "the child of the miracle," and all that is now needed to complete the comparison is that the French pretender shall return, as did the English, to his native land. I prophesy for him a fate quite contrary to that of Saul, who sought his father's asses and found a crown; the young Henry will come to France to seek a crown, and find only the paternal donkeys.

All who looked at the picture of Cromwell were generally busy in conjecture as to what were his reflections by the coffin of the dead Charles. History gives us two versions of this scene, or subject. According to one, Cromwell had the coffin opened by night and by torchlight, and with motionless body and distorted countenance stood before it for a long time like a silent statue. According to another report, he opened the coffin by day, calmly gazed at the corpse, and spoke the words, "He was a strongly built man, who might have lived a long time."[1] In my opinion,

[1] Heine, like a poet, leaves out of sight altogether the true object of this visit, which was to officially confirm, or prove by the highest civil authority, the fact of the King's death. In those days it was a rule, with few exceptions, that men personating deceased claimants to the throne soon appeared, declaring that the dead man had not been really executed, but that a corpse had been substituted, *et cetera*. History abounds in such cases. I myself have heard a sermon preached by a venerable clergy-

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Delaroche had this more democratic legend in his mind. In the face of his Cromwell there is not the least expression of astonishment, wonder, or any other storm of the soul; on the contrary, the beholder is shocked by this frightful, horrible calmness in the man's countenance. There he stands, a form as firm as earth, "brutal as a fact," powerful without pathos, naturally supernatural,[1] marvellously commonplace, outlawed and yet famous, beholding his work almost like a woodman who has just felled an oak. He has calmly cut down the great oak which once so proudly spread its branches over England and Scotland, the royal oak, in whose shadow bloomed so many beautiful races of men, and under which the elves of poetry danced their merriest rounds; he has felled it with his fatal axe, and there it lies on the ground with its

man of the Episcopal Church who claimed to be the son of Louis XVI., and who certainly bore an extraordinary likeness to his alleged father. It was, therefore, most natural that all pains should be taken to confirm the actual execution of such men, above all by their successors. It is not probable that Cromwell had any save "business feelings" on this occasion. —*Translator.*

[1] Such I take to be the real meaning in this place of the word *dämonisch*, which assuredly is not correctly translated in the French as *démoniaque*. The *demon*, as I have elsewhere explained, is not a devil, but an *energetic* spirit. It was the Church which converted all demons, save its own, into infernal fiends.—*Translator.*

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charming tracery of foliage and its uninjured crown. Ah, fatal axe!"

"Do you not think, sir, that the guillotine is a great improvement?" These were the croaking or quacked words with which a Briton, who stood behind me, interrupted the sentiments which I have just written down, and which so mournfully inspired my soul, while I looked at the wound on the neck of King Charles in the picture by Delaroche. It is somewhat too coarsely bloody. The lid of the coffin is also badly designed, giving to the latter the look of a violin-case. In other respects the picture is painted with incomparable superiority, combining the refinement of Van Dyck with the bold shadowing of Rembrandt, especially recalling the republican warrior forms in that great historic picture by the latter, "The Night Watch," which I have seen in the Trippenhuis at Amsterdam.

The character of the talent of Delaroche, as well as of most of his contemporaries, closely approaches that of the Flemish school, only that the French treat subjects with a lighter grace, and its national elegance flits over it superficially yet beautifully. Therefore I would call Delaroche a graceful and elegant Dutchman.

I may, in another place, report the conversations which I frequently overheard near this Cromwell. There could be no better place for

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eavesdropping (*zur Belauschung*), and catching public feelings and opinions. The picture is hung in the grand salon, at the entrance of the long gallery, and near it was placed Robert's admirable masterpiece, which is equally consoling and conciliatory. In fact, if the rough and military Puritan figure, that terrible harvester with the shorn royal head, stepping from a dark background, terrified the beholder and awoke in him wildly all political passions, the soul again felt itself calmed at the sight of those other more peaceful reapers, who, returning with their more beautiful sheaves, bloomed in the purest light of heaven at the harvest-home of love and peace. And though we may feel before one of these pictures that the great battle of the age is not yet at an end, and that the earth still trembles 'neath our feet, though we still hear the roaring of the storm, which seems to threaten that it soon will tear earth from its firm foundations, though we see a monstrous, deep abyss which thirstily absorbs the stream of blood so that dread fear of utter ruin seizes on our souls; still, in the other picture, we behold how peaceably secure the earth remains, how lovingly she yields her golden fruits, though all the mighty Roman tragedy, with gladiators and great emperors, vices and elephants, once trampled down the whole beneath their weight, then passed away.

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If we have contemplated in the first that history which rolls on so crazily in mud and blood, and then for centuries keeps calm and quiet to bound up again, and right and left goes wildly raging on—that which we call the history of the world; then in the picture, on the other hand, we read a history which is greater still, yet which has ample space to show itself in a farm-waggon drawn by buffaloes, a tale without a beginning or an end, which ever tells itself again like the sea-waves, and which, indeed, is simple as the sea, as the blue sky, or as the seasons' round—a holy history which the poet sings whose archives are in every human heart;—I mean the history of humanity!

It was really benevolent and beneficent that the picture of Robert was placed so near that by Delaroche. Many a time after I had looked long at the Cromwell, and sunk myself so deeply in it that I almost heard his words, monosyllabic and harsh, grimly growled and hissed according to that English utterance, which sounds like far-off rolling of the sea mingled with the shrill cries of storm-birds;[1] then I feel myself attracted by the silent magic of the neighbouring picture,

[1] I beg leave to point out this simile as an admirable description of the sounds of our language, which has been spoken of as "indescribable in tone."

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and then I seem to hear the merry euphony or the soft speech of Tuscany ringing on Roman lips, and all my soul was cheered and elevated by the sound.[1]

Ah! it was needed that the beloved ever-blooming melodious history of humanity should console our soul in the discordant tumult of the history of the world. I hear it at this instant as I write—hear it without—that harsh and horrid sound, more threatening and bewildering than ever, that maddening confusion of noise; drums are beating, weapons rattling and ringing, a rising flood of men with delirious sufferings and curses; for the mob of Paris whirls through the narrow streets and howls, "Warsaw is fallen! Our advanced guard has fallen! Down with the Ministry! War to Russia! death to Prussia!" It is hard for me to remain quietly seated at the table and write my poor paper on art, my peaceful criticism of pictures to an end. And yet, should I go forth into the street and there be recognised as a Prussian, then my brain may be so crushed in by some hero of July that all my ideas may be also flattened; or I may get a bayonet-thrust in the left side, where my

[1] *Lingua Toscana in bocca Romana.* The rest of this paper, or nine pages of the German original, is omitted from the last "complete" French version, though two of the five passages were in the first French edition.

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heart is already bleeding of itself; and more than all that, I may be put into the watchhouse as a foreign disturber of the peace.[1]

In such rioting all thoughts and pictures become confused and repel one another. The Goddess of Freedom of Delacroix met me with a changed countenance, almost with suffering in her wild eyes. Almost miraculously changed was the picture of the Pope by Vernet. The old and feeble vicegerent of Christ seemed all at once to be young and vigorous, and rose smiling on his chair, while his sturdy bearer was apparently opening his mouth to sing *Te Deum laudamus*. The young English prince sinks to the ground, and dying greets me with the sad deep look peculiar to Poles. Then the dead Charles assumes another face in sudden change, and looking closer, I behold no king, but murdered Poland in the black coffin, while Cromwell stands no more before my eyes, but the Czar of Russia, a noble, opulent form, quite as grand as he seemed to me to be years before in Berlin, when he stood beside the King of Prussia on the balcony and kissed the latter's hand. Thirty thousand Berlin folk, longing for anything like show, shouted "Hurrah!" and I thought in my heart, "God be gracious to

[1] As it happened to George A. Sala.

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us one and all." I knew the Sarmatian proverb, "Kiss devoutly the hand which you cannot cut off."[1]

Ah! I would that the King of Prussia had allowed only his left hand to be kissed and grasped the sword with his right, and therewith met the most dangerous enemy of our native land, as duty and conscience required him to do. Since those Hohenzollerns have assumed the duty of Lord Wardens of the realm in the north (*Vogtwürde*), so should they guard the Marches against aggressing Russia. The Russians are brave people, very nice folk indeed, but since the fall of Warsaw, the last bastion which separated them from us, our hearts have squeezed together so closely that I am getting alarmed.[2]

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[1] In the first edition, says the German publisher, this passage, very much mutilated by the censor, read as follows :—

". . . Ah! Germany's right hand was lame, lamed by kissing, and our best bulwark fell, our advanced guard fell. Poland lies in its coffin, and when the Czar again visits us, it is on the card to kiss his hand. God be gracious to us!

"But as regards regicide, nothing more . . . is said here. I will pass over further discussion and return to my proper theme."

What Heine here describes as a Sarmatian saying occurs in Burckhardt's "Arabic Proverbs."

[2] This reminds me that once when in conversation with Tourguénief, the Russian novelist, at the house of G. H. Lewes, our host stepped between us and said, "Here I am like little England, overwhelmed between great Russia and America," the allusion being to our respective heights, Lewes being a short

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I am afraid that if the Czar of Russia should visit us again, it will be on the card for us to kiss his hand. God be merciful to us all!

God be merciful to us all! Our last bastion is fallen, the goddess of Liberty turns pale, our friends lie on the ground, the Roman high priest rises triumphant by the coffin of the popular cause (*des Volksthums*).

I hear that Delaroche is now painting a companion-piece to the Cromwell, a Napoleon on St. Helena, and that he has chosen the moment when Sir Hudson Lowe is lifting the lid from the corpse of that great representative of Democracy.[1]

Returning to my subject, I should here have praised many a brave painter, as, for example, the two marine artists, Gudin and Isabey, as well as certain distinguished depictors of ordinary life, such as the brilliantly clever Destouches and the witty

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man, while the Russian and I were equally tall. To which I replied in the words of Heine, and in jest—

"When both our hearts together a Holy Alliance made,
They understood each other, both were together laid.
But oh! the poor young rosebud, which lay just underneath,
The minor, weaker ally, was almost crushed to death."

They are both dead now, and with them George Eliot, who stood by. But I trust it may be long ere the rose of England will ever be crushed by any giant.—*Translator.*

[1] It is with this brief passage of five lines that the French version of this *Salon* of 1830 ends. The comparison of Sir Hudson Lowe to Cromwell, and the calling Napoleon a representative of Democracy, are not very happy.—*Translator.*

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Pigal; but, despite the best will, it is all the same impossible to calmly analyse their merits, for there, out of doors, the storm rages too terribly, and no one can concentrate his thoughts when such tempests re-echo in the soul. It is even on so-called peaceful days very hard in Paris to turn one's mind away from what is in the streets, and indulge in wistful private dreams (*privatträumend nachzuhängen*). And though Art blooms more luxuriantly in Paris than elsewhere, we are still disturbed in its enjoyment at every moment by the rude rush and roar of life; the sweetest tones of Pasta and of Malibran are jarred by the suffering cries of bitter poverty, and the intoxicated heart, which has just drank eagerly from the inspiring cup of Robert's colour, will be immediately after sobered by the sight of public misery. It requires almost a Goethean egoism to attain here to undisturbed art enjoyment, and how very difficult art criticism thereby becomes I feel at this moment. I succeeded yesterday evening in writing something more of this paper, after I had, however, seen a deathly pale man fall to the ground on the Boulevards from hunger and wretchedness. But, when all at once a whole race falls on the Boulevard of Europe, then it is impossible to write further in peace. When the eyes of the critic are wet with tears his opinion is not worth much.

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Artists justly complain in this time of discord and of general enmity. They say that painting needs the peaceful olive-tree in every respect. Hearts which are anxiously awaiting the sound of the trumpet of war certainly have not an ear for sweet music. Men listen to the opera with deaf ears, the ballet is stared at too with little joy (*sogar wird nur theilnahmlos angeglotzt*). "And it was all the fault," the artists cry, "of that damned Revolution of July," and they curse freedom and the detestable politics, which absorb everything, so that nobody so much as mentions them.

I have heard, yet scarce believe my ears, that even in Berlin people talk no more about the theatre; and the *Morning Chronicle*, which yesterday announced that the Reform Bill had passed the Lower House, notices incidentally that Doctor Raupach is now in Baden-Baden, and bewails the times because his artistic talents are utterly lost.

I am certainly a great admirer of Doctor Raupach; I have always gone to the theatre when the *Schülerschwänke* (Students' Tricks), or the Seven Maidens in Uniform, or the Journeyman's Holiday [1] was performing, but I must protest that the fall of Warsaw causes me more

[1] Or, as one may say in English "the wayzgoose," *das Fest der Handwerker.*

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grief than I should experience if Doctor Raupach and all his artistic talent went to the dogs. O Warsaw, Warsaw! I would not have given thee for a whole wilderness of little caterpillars (*Raupachen*).

My old prophecy as to the end of the art period, which began with Goethe's cradle and which will end with his coffin, seems to be near its fulfilment. The present art must perish, because its principle is rooted in the worn-out old *régime*, or in the vanishing past of the Holy Roman realm. Therefore, like all the faded relics of that past, it stands in comfortless cold contradiction with the present age. It is this contradiction, not the tendency or taste of the time itself (*Zeitbewegung*) which is so injurious to art; on the contrary, this tendency and action of the age must strongly stimulate, as was the case in Athens and Florence, where even in the wildest storms of war and of factions art developed its most magnificent results. It is true that those Greek and Florentine artists did not lead an isolated, egoistic art life, (or one of) idly imagining souls hermetically sealed to the great joys and sorrows of their day; on the contrary, their works were but the visioned mirror of their age, and they themselves were thorough *men*, whose individuality was as strong as their creative power. Phidias and Michael Angelo were men of one

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piece with *their* works, and as they were in keeping with their Greek or Catholic temples, so were those artists in holy harmony with their surroundings; they did not work with pitifully limited, private personal inspiration, which easily and falsely insinuated itself into any subject at will. Æschylus sang of the Persians with the same truth which he manifested in fighting them at Marathon, and Dante wrote his comedy, not as a poet waiting for orders, but as a fugitive Guelf and in proscribed exile, and in the dire need of war he did not bewail the decay of his genius, but that of freedom.

However, the new age will bring forth a new art, which will be in inspired accord with itself, which will not need to take its symbolism from a faded past, and which must even develop a new style of work (*Technik*), which will altogether differ from that which preceded it. Until then the most self-intoxicated subjectivity, the individuality free from social, worldly influence (*die weltentzügelte Individualität*) or divine personality, may assert itself in all possible enjoyment of life, which is always worth more than the dead sham existence of ancient art.[1]

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[1] That is to say, until art shall, in accordance with a new age, have settled itself into new form and character, artists do well in representing at will all kinds of subjects and ideas;

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Or is there to be a sad and dreary end of art, as with the world itself? That overwhelming spirituality which now manifests itself in European literature is perhaps a sign of near extinction, just as men in the hour of death suddenly become clairvoyant and utter with pallid lips the most supernatural secrets. Or will grey, old Europe rejuvenate itself, and is the twilighting (*dämmernde*) spiritualism or supernaturalism of its artists and authors not a marvellous foreboding of death, but the terrible thrilling prescience of a new birth, the intellectual wafting of a new spring?

The Exhibition of this year has, by many a picture, removed that uncanny fear of death and announced a better promise. The Archbishop of Paris expects all benefit from the cholera or death; from it I hope for freedom and for life. There

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which is indeed as applicable to religion and political economy as to *art*. As I have elsewhere observed, Heine has very decidedly formed the idea, which was much in advance of his age, and which is even yet very little considered by anybody, that we are advancing rapidly to an age when *all* the art, poetry, and romance, faith and ideals of the past, as we understand them, are to pass away before a new positive or scientific age, in which in due time the feelings which survive or may be developed in man will develop in their turn and time a new art. Nor is it impossible that, with all the resources of science allied to all that is recorded of the past, there may be developed an art compared to which all that ever has been will be only as the barbarous alphabet of a stupendous literature.—*Translator.*

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our faiths differ. I believe that France, from the depths of the heart of its new life, will exhale a new art. Even this difficult problem will be solved by the French, by that light, fluttering people which we so naturally compare to a butterfly.

But the butterfly is also a symbol of the immortality of the soul and of its eternal renewal in youth.[1]

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[1] The *Salon* of 1831 has always been regarded as one of Heine's best works, and it has had certain very remarkable results. It did much to prove or proclaim to the world out of Germany that a literary man or scholar could really write as wisely and practically on art as if he were an artist, which fact has, however, been widely abused of late years by an innumerable number of his merely "literary" imitators, who have not enjoyed like Heine a sound education or regular training under such teachers and friends as Thiersch and Cornelius. Again, it was first in this paper that the theory of the utter irresponsibility and independence of the artist or genius, which has led to so much absurdity of late years, was vigorously, if not very logically, enunciated, as it had never been before, though long quietly adopted by the disciples of Goethe. With his usual inconsistency, Heine leaves the door wide open for every one who considers himself a genius to rush in and "manifest" just as he pleases. In contrast with this, his conjecture that the age of all art, as it has been hitherto understood, is drawing to an end, is replete with strange truth, and was marvellous for the time when it was uttered.—*Translator.*

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THE EXHIBITION OF PICTURES OF 1833.[1]

WHEN I came to Paris in the summer of 1831, nothing astonished me so much as the annual Exhibition of Pictures, then opened, and although the most important political and religious revolutions demanded my attention, I could not help writing about the great revolution which was here taking place in the realm of art, and of which the Salon alluded to was the most important indication.

Like the rest of my fellow-countrymen, I had the most violent prejudices against French art, that is to say, against French painting, whose latest developments were quite unknown to me. But there is something which is very peculiar as regards painting in France, for it also followed the social movement, and was at last rejuvenated with the people. Yet this did not take place so directly or promptly as in the sister-arts of Music and Poetry, which had begun their metamorphosis before the Revolution.

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[1] This paper is omitted in the French version.—*German Editor.*

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M. Louis de Maynard, who contributed a series of articles to the *Europe Littéraire* on the Exhibition for this year, and which are among the most interesting ever written by any Frenchman on art, has, as regards the preceding remark, expressed himself in the following words, which I reproduce as accurately as I can, with regard to the charm and grace of the original :—

"The painting of the eighteenth century began in the same manner and under the same conditions as the contemporary politics and literature; in the same manner it attained a certain perfected development, and they all broke down together when all in France was crushed. A strange age which begins with wild laughter at the death of Louis XIV., and which ends in the arms of the public executioner, of *Monsieur le Bourreau*, as Madame du Barry called him. Oh, the age which denied everything, mocked everything, desecrated everything, and believed in nothing, and was all the better adapted for that to the great work of destruction, and so destroyed it without building up anything in the least, and not desiring to do so!

"Meantime the arts, though they followed the same movement, did not pursue it with equal pace. Therefore painting in the eighteenth century lagged behind. It had produced a Crebillon, but no Voltaire and no Diderot. Always in the

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pay of aristocratic patrons, always under the petticoat protection of reigning mistresses, little by little, I know not how, all its strength and energy gradually dissolved. In all its extravagance and wantonness, it never manifested that vehemence or inspiration which carries us away and dazzles us, and which atones for bad taste. It impresses us disagreeably with its frosted arabesques, and their faded petty decoration in the realm of a boudoir, where a jaunty little beauty, stretched on a sofa, frivolously fans herself. Favart with his Eglées and Zulmas is more truthful than Watteau and Boucher with their coquettish shepherdesses and idyllic abbés. Though he made himself ridiculous,[1] Favart meant well. The painters of that time took little part in that which was going on and getting ready in France. The outbreak of the Revolution surprised them *en negligé*. Philo-

[1] As did many good English painters of the last generation, when they turned from the sound natural Anglicism which was in their hearts, and, to please the age, painted Southern European and Oriental trash, after the tone and style of the Leigh Hunt Cockney-Italian, Byronic-Greek school. In which thing it is curious to observe that they even lost *technic*, showing that where mind goes, matter will follow. This falling off from Nature towards the fashionable, fancy-ball style, was due, not to the artists, but to their patrons, especially to the rich and ignorant; who have since then increased incredibly in number, with the natural result of a corresponding degradation of art.—*Translator.*

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sophy, Politics, Science, and Literature, every one supported by a single man, had thrown themselves like a mob of drunken men in stormy assault all at one object and aim, whose nature they really did not know; but the nearer they approached it, the lower was their fever, the more peaceful their countenances, the more deliberate their steps. Yet they might have darkly foreboded that goal which they did not know, for they could have read in the Word of God that all mortal joys end in tears. And ah! they came from a by far too riotous and merrily mad orgie, not to be destined to the darkest doom. When one considers the restlessness wherewith they were often tormented in the sweetest intoxication of this revel, one might believe that the scaffold where all this delirious rapture was to end rose before, beckoning from afar like the dark head of a spectre.

"Painting, which held itself aloof from the actual (*ernsthaften*) social movement, either because it was weary of wine and women, or because it considered its co-operation as fruitless, had to the last moment slipped along amid the roses, perfume of musk, and pastourelles of the time. Vien and some other artists felt indeed that their art *must* at any price be raised above all this, but they knew not where to begin. Leseur, whom David's teacher esteemed highly,

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could not develop a new school. He must be responsible for that. Thrown headlong into an age when all spiritual rule and power was in the hands of a Marat and Robespierre, David was in the same perplexity as those artists. We know, however, that he went to Rome, and returned as much of a disciple of Vanloo as when he had departed. It was not till later, when Græco-Roman antiquity was preached, and that publicists and philosophers came to the idea that the world must return to the literary, social, and political forms of the ancients, that his intellect developed itself in all its innate boldness, and then with a daring hand he tore art from the trifling, toying, perfumed, pastoral frippery in which it was sunk, and raised it to the serious sphere of antique heroism. The reaction was, like all reactions, without pity, and David carried it to extremes. There began with him a terrorism even in painting."

Germany has long been well informed as to David's works and influence. Our French guests informed us oft and amply during the Empire as to the great David; and we have heard much of his pupils, Gerard, Gros, Girardet, and Guerin. But we know less of another man whose name also begins with G, and who, if not the founder, was still the beginner (*der Eröffner*) of a new school in France. That was Gericault.

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I have in the preceding pages given some indirect information as to this school. In describing the best works of the Salon of 1831, I also explained the characteristics of the later masters. That Exhibition was, according to universal opinion, the most remarkable ever seen in France, and it will remain memorable in the history of art. The pictures which I praised in my description will be famous for centuries, and what I wrote will be perhaps a valuable contribution to the history of painting.

I was able for the first time to convince myself of the immeasurable importance of the Salon of 1831 this year, when the halls of the Louvre, which had been closed for two months, were opened on the 1st of April, and we were greeted by the latest products of French art. As is usual, the old pictures which constitute the National Gallery were covered by screens of cloth, and on this were hung the new pictures, so that here and there behind the Gothic absurdities of some new romantic painter there peeped out charmingly the mythologic masterpieces of old Italian artists. The whole Exhibition was like a *codex palimpsestus*, where one vexed himself the more over a new barbaric text because he knew what divine Greek poetry was scribbled over by it.

Nearly four thousand five hundred pictures were exhibited, and there was hardly one master-

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piece among them all. Was that the consequence of a too great exhaustion after excessive exertion? Was there manifested in art that national drunken sick headache (*Nationalkatzenjammer*) which we now observe in the political life of the French since the too delirious intoxication of freedom has been subdued? Was the Exhibition only a variegated yawning, a coloured echo of the Chamber of Deputies of this year? If the Salon of 1831 was still glowing with the sun of July, it seemed as if the dreary shower of June was still drizzling in that of 1833. The two famed heroes of the last Salon, Delaroche and Robert, did not appear this time in the lists, and the other painters whom I had praised gave us this year nothing remarkable. With the exception of a picture by Tony Johannot, a German, not a single picture in the Exhibition touched my feelings. M. Scheffer gave again a Margaret which showed great progress are regards technical execution, yet which had no great significance or force. It was the same idea more passionately painted, but more freezingly conceived. And Horace Vernet contributed once more a great picture in which there were only certain beautiful details. Decamps would seem to have made merry at the expense of the Salon and of himself, for what he sent were monkey-pieces; among them a really admirable baboon

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painting an historical picture. The German-Christian long-flowing hair of the animal reminded me amusingly of friends over the Rhine.

Ingres attracted the most remark this year, and was made noted by both praise and the contrary. He contributed two pictures; one was the portrait of an Italian girl, and the other that of M. Bertin *l'aîné*, an old Frenchman. Even as Louis Philippe was monarch in the realm of politics, so was Ingres this year king in the domain of art. The character of Ingres is also that of a *juste milieu*, he is just half-way between Mieris and Michael Angelo. In his pictures there is the heroic boldness of Mieris and the refined rendering of colour of Michael Angelo.

But if the painting in the Exhibition of this year awoke but little enthusiasm, sculpture manifested itself all the more magnificently, contributing works among which many authorised the highest hopes, and among them was one which may be placed in rivalry with the best products of the art. This the "Cain" of M. Etex. It is a group of symmetric, even monumental beauty, full of antediluvian character, and yet equally inspired with the spirit of the time. It sets forth Cain with wife and child, abandoned to destiny, brooding without thought, a petrifaction of hopeless calm. This man slew his brother in consequence of a quarrel as to a sacrifice or a

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religious dispute. Yes, religion caused the first fratricide, and since then it bears the brand of blood upon its brow.

I shall refer again to the "Cain" of Etex when I write of the remarkable flight which sculpture has taken above and beyond painting. The Spartacus and Theseus which are placed in the gardens of the Tuileries awake in me, whenever I walk there, reflective admiration. Yet it pains me to think when it rains that such masterpieces of modern art are so utterly exposed to the open air. Heaven is not so mild here as in Greece, and yet even there the better works of statuary were not so entirely exposed to wind and weather as is commonly thought, for they were well protected, generally in temples. As yet atmospheric influences have not much injured the new statues in the Tuileries, and it is pleasant indeed to see them greeting us, so dazzlingly white, from amid the fresh, green chestnut leaves. And it is so droll, when small children are playing about, to hear their *bonnes* explaining to them what the naked marble man means who looks so angry while he holds a sword in his hand, or what a queer old thing that is who has an ox's head, and who is being killed by the other man with a club. The ox-man, they declare, had eaten up a great many children. Young Republicans, in passing by, say that Spartacus looks significantly

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up at the windows of the Tuileries, and in the Minotaur they see the kingdom. Others find fault with the manner in which Theseus swings his club, and insist that if he were to strike he would certainly smash his own hand. However this may be, thus far all looks promising enough. Yet after a few winters these admirable statues will be weatherworn and ragged, and moss will grow on the sword of Spartacus, and peaceable families of insects will nestle between the ox-head of Minotaurus and the club of Theseus, unless the latter be broken away, club and all.

And since so many useless soldiers must be fed, it seems to me that it would be well if His Majesty in the Tuileries were to place by every statue a sentinel, who, when it rains, could spread an umbrella over it. Thus under the bourgeois-royal umbrella it would be protected in the true sense of the word.

Which it can hardly be said to be at present, for there is a general wailing among all artists over the extreme parsimony of the King. It is said that as Duke of Orleans he zealously protected art. Now they grumble that he orders too few pictures in proportion to his position, and in like proportion pays too little money for them. And yet he is, with the exception of the King of Bavaria, the greatest connoisseur among living princes. But his mind is perhaps now too

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much occupied with politics to permit him to take the interest in art matters which he once did. But although his predilection for painting and sculpture may have somewhat cooled, his inclination to architecture has risen well nigh to raging passion. Never yet was there so much building in Paris as is now being carried out by the King's command. We see everywhere the plans and preparations for new erections and new streets, and in the Tuileries and the Louvre there is constant sound of hammering. The plan for the new library is the grandest which can be conceived. The Church of the Madeleine, the old Temple of Fame, is near its completion, and they have resumed building on the vast Palace of Ambassadors which Napoleon began to build on the right side of the Seine, and which was only half completed, so that it looked like the ruin of a giant's castle.

In addition to this, colossal monuments are being built in public places. On the Place de la Bastile rises the great elephant, which represents, not inaptly, the conscious strength and powerful reason of the people. We already see in the Place de la Concorde a wooden facsimile of the Obelisk of Luxor; in a few months the Egyptian original will take its place, and serve as a monument of the fearful events which here took place on the 21st January. But although

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this hieroglyphed messenger from the marvellous land of Egypt may bring us so many experiences of thousands of years, still the old lamp-post which has been for half a century on the Place de la Concorde has experienced far greater wonders, and the ancient red, primevally holy giant stone will grow pale and tremble when all at once, on some still winter night, that frivolous French lantern shall begin to gossip and relate the history of the place where they both are standing.

Architecture is the chief passion of the King, and it may become the cause of his fall. I fear lest, despite all promises, the *forts détachés* will always be in his head and in his heart, for his favourite implements, the trowel and hammer, can be freely applied to such work—and verily his heart leaps up for joy when he so much as thinks of hammering. It may be that the sound at times quite drowns even the voice of wisdom. When it does, then he is wheedled by his greatest whim into the faith that all his safety lies in those fair forts, and that the building them will be an easy and a pleasing task. Thus by the medium of architecture we perhaps may come into the deepest reach of politics. As regards the fortifications and the King himself, I will here give a fragment from a memoir which I wrote during last July.

"The whole secret of the Revolutionary party

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consists in this, that the Government will no longer attack, but awaits some great attack from it, so as to be able to offer absolute resistance. Therefore a new insurrection cannot break out in Paris without the special sanction or connivance of Government, which must first give rise to it by some decided act of folly. Should the insurrection succeed, France will be at once proclaimed as a republic, and the revolution will whirl all over Europe, whose ancient institutions, should they not be shattered, will be at least terribly shaken. Should the revolution fail, then there will begin a terrible reaction, which will be aped in neighbouring countries with the usual clumsiness, which will in any case result in bringing about many changes in existing forms. In *any* case, the peace of Europe will be endangered by anything out of the common course of events which the present Government may undertake against the interests of the revolution, and by every inimical act which it may commit against its parties. And as the will of the present Government is entirely that of the King, therefore the breast of Louis Philippe is the true Pandora's box containing all the evils which may all at once be poured forth over all the earth. Unfortunately, it is not possible to read the thoughts of his heart in his face, for the younger line seem to be quite as accomplished in the art

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of dissimulation as the elder. No actor in the world has his own face so completely at command, no one knows how to play a part through in such masterly manner as our Citizen-King. He is perhaps one of the cleverest, wisest, and bravest men in France, and yet he was perfectly able, when it was necessary to win the crown, to assume a thoroughly harmless, small citizen-like, timid air, and the people who put him on the throne believe beyond all question that they can pull him down from it without further ceremony when they will.

"But this time it is the monarchy which has played the idiot part of Brutus, for which reason it is really at themselves, and not at the King, whom the French should laugh when they see the caricatures in which the latter is represented with his white felt hat and great umbrella. Both were requisite 'properties' (*Requisiten*), and belonged to the part played, just as much as the *poignées de main*. Writers of history will some day give him a certificate that he acted it very well; the knowledge of which may console him amid the satires and caricatures which choose him as the target of their wit. The number of such jeering prints and jarring pictures (*Zerrbilder*) becomes greater every day, and we see everywhere on the walls of houses immense pears. Never yet was a prince so mocked in

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his own city as Louis Philippe. But he thinks to himself, 'He who laughs last laughs best; ye will not swallow the pear, in time it will swallow you.' Of course he feels all the insults which are heaped on him, for he is human. Nor is he of such a gentle, lamb-like nature that he would not revenge himself; he is a man, but a strong one, who can restrain his anger of the moment and control his passions. When the right hour shall arrive, then he will strike boldly, first at the petty enemy within, and then against the enemy without, who has wounded and slandered him far more seriously. This man is capable of anything, and who knows but that he may throw down before the whole Holy Alliance, as gage of battle, that glove which has become so dirty, from so many *poignées de main.* He is truly not deficient in princely feeling. I saw him just before the Revolution of July in felt hat with the umbrella, but how changed of a sudden did he seem on the 6th of July of last year, when he subdued the Republicans! Then he was no longer the good-natured, great-bellied petty citizen and laughing face of flesh—even his corpulence now gave him dignity; he held his head as proudly and as high as any of his ancestors had done—yes, rose in weighty, mighty majesty, grand to behold, and every *pound* a king! But as soon as he felt that the crown

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was not quite sure on his head, and that there might be many a tempest yet, how soon he cocked the old felt hat on his head and took the old umbrella in his hand! How like a hearty, cheerful citizen, a few days later at the great review, he greeted Gossip-Tailor, Cobbler-Snob, and right and left shook hands with all his might; and not with hand alone, but with his heart—with smiling lips—there seemed to be a smile even in his whiskers. Yet this good, brave man, smiling and greeting, praying grace from all, had fourteen *forts détachés* in his heart!

"These forts are now the subject of the most serious questions, and the answer thereto may be terrible and shatter the whole world. That is ever the ancient fatality (*Fluch*) which has hurled clever men headlong to destruction; they believed themselves to be shrewder than whole races, and yet experience has shown that the masses always judged rightly, and always saw through the intentions of their rulers, if not of all their plans. For the people are all-knowing, all-seeing; the eye of the people is the eye of God. And the French people compassionately shrugged their shoulders when Government paternally feigned [1] that it would fortify Paris in order

[1] *Landesväterlichst vorheuchelte*, literally, "patriotically-paternally gammoned unto them." *Landesvater*, "a father of his country."

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to protect it from the Holy Alliance. Everybody knew in his heart that Louis Philippe wished to defend himself against Paris. And it is certainly true that the King has reason enough to fear Paris, for his crown will glow on his head and singe his wig so long as the great flame flares in Paris, the fireplace of the Revolution. But why does he not confess all this openly? Why does he always pose (*gebärdet*) as a trusty watchman of this fire? It would perhaps be more to his advantage if he would plainly confess to his grocers and similar partisans that he can no longer maintain himself and them unless he is altogether lord of Paris, and unless he can surround the capital with fourteen forts, whose cannon could, from above, command silence at every *émeute*. An open confession that it was a matter which concerned his head, and those of all the *juste milieu*, would perhaps have produced good results. But now it happens that not only the party of the Opposition, but also the *boutiquiers* or shop-people, and most of the hangers-on of the *juste milieu* system, are out of all temper with the *forts détachés*, and the press has explained to them in complete detail the reasons for their being vexed. For the greater part of the shop-people are of this opinion, namely, that Louis Philippe is an admirable king, and worth some sacrifice, or even putting one's self into danger to defend, as was the case on the 5th and 6th of

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June, when 40,000 men, in common with 20,000 troops of the line, risked their lives against several hundred Republicans; but that for all this he is not worth so much as that, in order to keep him in case of later and more serious *émeutes*, all Paris, including themselves, their wives, children, and shops, should be in imminent danger of being shot and blown to annihilation by fourteen citadels. Moreover, they assert that as for fifty years people have here been accustomed to all kinds of revolutions, it has been so planned that in minor *émeutes* the authorities can promptly interfere, that peace can be soon reinstated, while great insurrections were promptly submitted to with the same result. And the strangers, too, the rich strangers who spend so much money in Paris, have learned that a revolution is quite harmless for all peaceable spectators, that it all takes place in a very orderly, in fact, in a nicely artistic manner, so that it is really quite an amusement for a foreigner to experience a revolution here. But if the city were to be surrounded by *forts détachés*, then the fear that everybody might be blown to the devil early some morning would frighten away foreigners and provincials, and not the strangers alone, but many *rentiers* who inhabit the city; in which case there would be much less sugar, pepper, and pomatum sold, less house-rent paid—in short, trade and traffic would be ruined. Therefore the grocers, who are thus con-

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cerned for the interest on their houses, for the customers of their shops, and who tremble for themselves and families, oppose a project by which Paris would become a fortress, and no longer be the careless, merry, happy Paris of the olden time. Others who, indeed, belong to the *juste milieu*, but who have not renounced the liberal principles of the Revolution, and who cherish those principles even more than they do Louis Philippe, would much rather see the citizen-kingdom protected by institutions than by a kind of buildings which recall much too vividly the old feudal times, when the holder of the citadel ruled the town as he pleased. Louis Philippe, they say, has been thus far a trusty guardian of the citizenly equality and freedom which was conquered with so much blood, but he is, after all, only a man, and in all men there lurks a longing for absolute dominion. When in possession of the *forts détachés*, he can, unsuspected, gratify every caprice at will; he would then be far less restrained than were our kings before the Revolution; for they could only put a few single discontented subjects into the Bastile, but Louis Philippe is surrounding the whole city with Bastilles, and, in fact, would Ba-steal all Paris.[1] And even though the noble intentions of the

[1] *Embastillire ganz Paris*, hinting at *emballiren*, to pack up, put away, or plunder.—*Translator.*

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present King were absolutely certain, no one would be responsible for those of his successors, much less for those of any parties or persons who by subtlety or chance might acquire the control of those *forts détachés*, and so control Paris at will. But far more serious than these objections is another source of anxiety which was expressed by everybody, and which even silenced those who thus far neither took part with the Government or even with the Revolution. It involved the highest and deepest interests of the whole people, or their national independence. In spite of all French vanity, which never reflects willingly on the events of 1814 and 1815, it must be secretly confessed that a third invasion is not so altogether out of the reach of possibility, that the *forts détachés* might not only be no impediment to the Allies, if they would take Paris, but that they might even take these forts, and so keep the city for ever in control, or even totally destroy it. I here give only the opinions of the French, who are convinced that in the former invasion the foreign troops kept at a distance from Paris because they found no point of resistance against the vast mass of the inhabitants, and that now the ruling sovereigns in the depths of their hearts have no deeper desire than to utterly destroy Paris, the central home (*foyer*) of Revolution.

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Will the project of the *forts détachés* then be abandoned for ever? That, God who sees into the hearts of kings, only knows!

I should indeed remark that we are perhaps blinded by a party spirit, and that the King entertains views for all common interests, and truly means nothing more than to barricade us against the Holy Alliance. But it is improbable. The Holy Alliance has a thousand reasons rather to fear Louis Philippe, and, moreover, a very great and weighty cause to wish for his maintenance. For, firstly, Louis Philippe is the most powerful prince in Europe; his material resources are multiplied tenfold by his innate activity, and ten, yes, a hundred times stronger are the intellectual means by which he could rule in case of need. And should, despite all this, the united sovereigns bring about his fall, then they would have overthrown the mightiest and perhaps last support of monarchy in Europe. Yes, all sovereigns should daily thank the Creator of crowns and thrones on their knees that Louis Philippe is King of France. They have already committed the folly of killing the man who had the greatest power to control the Republicans. I mean Napoleon. Truly ye are right in calling yourselves kings by the grace of God; for it was a special grace of God that He still sent the kings a man who rescued them when Jacobinism

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again had the axe in its hands, and threatened to destroy all ancient kingdoms. Should the princes kill this man, God can help them no more. By sending Napoleon Bonaparte and Louis Philippe Orleans, these two miracles, He has twice saved the kingdom. For God is reasonable, and sees that the Republican form of government is very ill-suited, unprofitable, and deadening for old Europe; and I too think this. But perhaps both of us can do nothing against the blindness of princes and demagogues; against stupidity even the gods fight in vain.

Yes, it is my holiest conviction that Republicanism would be unsuitable, unprofitable, and not enlivening for the nations of Europe, and quite impossible for Germans. When, in blind imitation of the French, the German demagogues preached a German republic, and attempted to vilify and slander with insane rage, not only kings, but kingdom itself, which is the last guarantee of society, I held it to be my duty to speak out plainly, as I have done in the preceding pages, regarding the 21st January. Although my inclination for monarchy was somewhat embittered since the 28th June of the preceding year, I have not omitted those expressions from this republication of my work. I am proud that I once had the courage not to let myself lapse or be led into imprudence and error, neither by

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cajolery, nor intrigue, nor by threats. He who does not go as far as his heart impels and reason permits, is a poltroon; he who goes further than he willingly would, is a slave.[1]

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[1] It is remarkable that the best portion of the remarks on art in this, which is by title a paper entirely on pictures, consists of a very long quotation from Louis de Maynard, whose style and manner of thought are marvellously like Heine's own, and which he would perhaps have made his own by paraphrase, had he not been on this occasion like the Louisiana darkey who was too lazy to steal even a fat turkey when it came wandering by his door, and also because he was "too anxious to talk." Heine was here over-anxious to hold forth—*apropos des bottes*—on the inexhaustible *forts détachés*, Louis Philippe and Napoleon. It may be remarked as beautifully illustrating his inconsistency, that while he elsewhere very frequently and shrewdly insists that Communism is eventually to prevail in the world, he here declares it to be his "holiest conviction" that Republicanism "would be unsuitable, unprofitable, and not enlivening for the nations of Europe," which is not only illogical, but also sins against the canon laid down by Sainte-Beuve in flagellating Lamartine, that no one should string three adjectives together, or, as he gives it, nobody ought to form "l'habitude de couper sa pensée, sa phrase par trois membres, de proceder trois par trois." But Heine's Muse bears triplets of words on all possible occasions. Of the whole paper it may well be said:—

> "All you have told us is most admirable,
> But what the devil has it all to do
> With telling us about the Pumpkin Fair?"
>
> —*Translator.*

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THE EXHIBITION OF PICTURES OF 1843.

PARIS, *May* 7, 1843.

THE Exhibition of pictures for this year excites unusual interest, yet it is impossible for me to pass even a half-way seasonable opinion as to the vaunted pre-eminence of this Salon. So far, I have only felt discontent beyond comparison when I wandered through the halls of the Louvre. These delicious colours which all burst loose screaming at me at once, this variegated lunacy which grins at me from every side, this anarchy in gold frames makes a painful, evil impression on me. I torture myself in vain in trying to set in order this chaos in my mind, and to find therein the thoughts of the time, or even the allied mark of common character, by which these pictures show themselves as the results of our time. For all works of one and the same period have a trace or trait of such character, the painter's mark, which we call the spirit of the age. Thus, for example, the canvases of Watteau,

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Boucher, Vanloo,[1] reflect the graceful, powdered playfulness of *pastourelles* and fêtes, the rouged and frivolous emptiness *des fadaises galantes*, the sweetish hooped-petticoat happiness of the prevalent Pompadour rule, in which we see everywhere gaily-ribboned shepherds' crooks, and never a sword. On the other hand, the pictures of David and his school are only the coloured echo of the Republican virtuous period which laps over into the Imperial glory of war-time; and here we find a forced inspiration for the marble model, an abstract frosty intoxication of reason, the design being correct, severe, and hard, the colour turbid, harsh, and indigestible—a Spartan broth. But what will manifest itself as the real character of the age (*die zeitliche Signatur*) to our descendants when they study the pictures of our present painters? By what common peculiarities will these pictures show themselves at a glance as the products of our present period? Has, perhaps, the spirit of *bourgeoisie*,

[1] To which we should add Lancret and Greuze. *Des fadaises galantes* occurs only in the French version, which is naturally in all such passages as this superior to the German, which is here rather rough-cornered, clumsy, and affected. "Hoop-skirt happiness," however, describes admirably the silly smilingness, the air of baby-bliss which the shallowest and most corrupt of ages cast over the life of its feeblest and wickedest representatives. Heine here merely repeats the ideas given by Maynard in the previous paper.—*Translator.*

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of industrialism, which penetrates all French life, shown itself so powerful in the arts of design that every picture of our time bears the stamp of its coat of arms? It is especially the pictures of saints which abound in the Exhibition of this year which awaken in me such conjecture. There hangs in the long hall a Flagellation (of Christ), the principal figure in which, with his suffering air, resembles the chairman or president of some company which has come to grief, and now appears before the stockholders and creditors to give an account of himself and his transactions. Yes, the latter also appear on the scene in the form of hangmen and Pharisees who are terribly angry at the *Ecce Homo*, and seem to have lost a great deal of money by their investments. The artist is said to have depicted in the principal figure his uncle, M. August Leo.[1] The faces in the properly so-called historical pictures, representing heathen or mediæval subjects, also recall retail shops, stock gambling, mercantilism, and petty *bourgeois* life. There may be seen a William the Conqueror, who only needs a bear-skin cap to be changed into an honest National Guard, who with model zeal mounts guard, pays his bills punctually, honours his wife, and who

[1] An unfortunate bankrupt railway speculator, whom Heine ridicules in *Lutetia.—Translator.*

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certainly deserves the Legion of Honour. But—the portraits! The greater part of them have such a *pecuniary* expression, one so egoistic and morose, that I can only explain it by thinking that the living original during the time when he was sitting for his portrait thought of the money which it would cost, while the painter was regretting on his side the time which he must devote to the pitiable money-job.[1]

Among the pictures of the saints which indicate the great pains which the French take to appear very religious, I remarked a Woman of Samaria at the Well. Although the Saviour belongs to

[1] Bitter, but perfectly true. What is remarkable in this sketch is that it should have been written in 1843, when the spirit of which Heine complains had only begun to manifest itself a little in art, or at least very little indeed compared to what we now see of it. The mutual relations of the artist and sitter and their reflections as here described are very *apropos* to an anecdote which I am sure many of my readers have heard. A great American banker who was sitting for his statue to a very distinguished artist and man of letters, also American, asked the latter if he did not think that the statue when completed would be "a very good thing" for him (the artist)—meaning that it would not only be well paid for, but also enhance his fame. "And don't you think, Mr. P.," retorted the artist, "that it will be a very good thing *for you?*" I myself knew a lady artist to whom one of the same class made this remark: "It's all mighty fine, Miss ——, to be able to make pictures, and know all about them, but it is a great deal better to have the money to buy them with, and to know how to make it." As the remark was quite uncalled for, its refinement will be most apparent.—*Translator.*

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the inimical race of the Jews, she still shows him kindness. She offers her pitcher of water to the thirsty man, and, while he drinks, glances at him with a droll and very shrewd side-look, which reminds me of the admirable answer given by a clever young Suabian girl to the Herr Superintendent when the latter examined a class in Bible catechism. He asked, "How did the woman of Samaria know that Christ was a Jew?" "By his *nose*," answered boldly the little Suabian.[1]

The most remarkable religious picture of the Salon is by Horace Vernet, the only great master who has this year contributed a picture to the Exhibition. The subject is very equivocal and insidious, and we must most decidedly condemn, if not the choice, the manner in which it is carried out.[2] This subject, taken from the Bible, is the story of Judah and his daughter-in-law, Thamar. According to our modern moral ideas and feelings, these two persons appear to

[1] In the original, *An der Beschneidung*, as in the French, *A la circoncision.—Translator.*

[2] Which condemnation is decidedly as great a specimen of cant and humbug as was ever uttered, even by a critic, Heine's own works abounding in "pictures" of quite as rosy a hue; the anecdote of the little Suabian just given being not one whit better or worse, from a moral point of view, than the subject of Vernet's work. But it was perhaps the feeling that he had gone a little too far in this latter sketch which suddenly recalls our author to virtuous propriety. If he thought it so very immoral, why did he dwell on it?—*Translator.*

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us in a very immoral light; but according to the views of antiquity, when the highest duty of woman consisted in bearing children to continue the race of her husband, especially after the old Hebraic opinion, according to which the nearest relation should marry the widow of a deceased man, if the latter died without children, in order to guarantee by such posthumous descent not only the family property, but also the memory of the dead, the continuation of their lives in their posterity, and, so to speak, their earthly immortality—from such an antique point of view the deed of Thamar was in the highest sense a moral, pious act, most gratifying to God, naïvely beautiful, and almost as heroic [1] as the deed of Judith, which approaches near to our modern ideas of patriotism. As for her father-in-law, Judah, we

[1] The French version adds *aussi moral* to *presque aussi héroïque.* It was certainly a deed of the peculiar kind of morality which was best appreciated by our author. *Thamar* means a palm-tree, and the male plant bears a vast blossom, the pollen from which is wafted often scores or hundreds of miles ere it fructifies the *Thamar*, who is, so to speak, unknown to him. So in the Biblical narrative, which is in part, at least, a myth, Judah fructifies one whom he does not see. The palm is the mother of Israel, "and it appears on Jewish, Roman, and Phœnician coins as the type of Palestine" [*Frölich, Ann. Syr.* Tab. 18, also *Spanheim, De præstant. et usu num.*, p. 272]. But it is "remarkably a type of sexual love and marriage" [*Von Hammer*, in *J. Wiener Jahrbuch*, 1818, iii. p. 151]. Hence Thamar is specially the heroine of such a myth.—*Translator.*

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do not claim for him the laurel (of virtue), but we absolutely deny that he in any case committed any sin.[1] For firstly, such commerce with a woman met on the highway was for a Hebrew no more an improper act than was enjoying a fruit plucked from some tree by the roadside to quench one's thirst, and it was doubtless very warm in Mesopotamia when this occurred, and the poor patriarch was in great want of something to refresh him. And then the whole transaction bears so plainly the mark of the Divine will; it was providential, for without that great thirst Thamar would have had no child; but this child became the ancestor of David, who reigned as king over Judah and Israel, and he was, at the same time, the ancestor of that yet greater King with the crown of thorns who now rules all the world—Jesus of Nazareth.

As for the conception of this subject, I will describe it briefly, without involving any moral homily. Thamar, a magnificently beautiful woman, sits by the roadside, revealing, for the opportunity, her most voluptuous and luxuriant charms. The foot, the leg, the knee, *et cetera*,

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[1] Quant à son beau-père nous ne revendiquons pas précisément pour lui le prix Monthyon, a prize annually awarded to the most virtuous persons. As for the *truth* of this assertion, the Old Testament *abounds* in bitterest denunciation of all adultery and fornication by either man or woman.—*Translator.*

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are of a perfection approaching poetry. Her breasts burst forth from a tight garment, blooming, perfumed, alluring as the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden. With the right hand,[1] which is also most ravishingly and admir-

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[1] French version—*Avec la main gauche*, which, if I remember rightly, is correct. The original text renders the whole of our author's somewhat obscure comment much clearer. It is as follows: it being premised that Thamar first "covered herself with a *veil*."

"When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot, because she had covered her face.

"And he turned unto her by the way and said, 'Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee' (for he knew not that she was his daughter-in-law). And she said, 'What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me?'

"And he said, 'I will send thee a kid from the flock.' And she said, 'Wilt thou give me a pledge till thou send it?'

"And he said, 'What pledge shall I give thee?' And she said, 'Thy signet (ring), and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand.' And he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him."

It will be seen by this that the substitution of a corner of the garment by the artist is a liberty which materially interferes with the whole meaning of the story. When Thamar went home "she laid aside her veil." As death was the penalty of discovery in such cases, the veil was absolutely necessary. The great value of the pledge and the payment of a kid indicate that prostitution was very profitable; hence the great risk incurred. The "double movement of the hands" is, therefore, entirely an error. I have illustrated this rather fully, because the *Salon* is professedly a work of art criticism, and the very highest canon in it is that the artist shall manifest *ingenuity* in the disposition of personal details, as when the author declares in his paper on Vernet (*Salon*, 1831) that it would only occur to

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ably painted, the beauty holds an end of her white garment before her face so as to display only her forehead and eyes. These great black eyes are as seductive as the voice of the slippery aunt of Satan. The fair woman is together apple and serpent, and we cannot blame poor Judah for offering her in such haste the pledges which she demands, staff, ring, and girdle. To receive them she has stretched out her left hand, while she, as I said, hides her face with the right hand. This double movement of the hands indicates a truthfulness such as art only develops in its happiest moments. There is in it a truth to nature which is enchanting. The artist has given to Judah a lustful physiognomy more appropriate to a faun than to a patriarch, and his whole garb consists of that white woollen covering which plays so great a part in so many pictures since the capture of Algiers. Since the French have entered into such direct relation with the East, their painters give to Biblical heroes really Oriental costumes. The earlier traditional and imaginary dress has been, in fact, somewhat worn out by the wear of three hundred years, and it

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a very great artist to arrange his characters in a certain manner. Such inventive genius may be more developed in a boy who has no knowledge of drawing, and no capacity for it, than in a great painter, and when, as in the present case, its premises are false, it simply becomes ridiculous.—*Translator.*

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would be most unsuitable to now mask the ancient Hebrews, after the fashion of the Venetians, according to the dress of the present day.[1] The landscape and animals of the East have also been treated of late by the French with greater truth in their historical pictures, and one sees in the camel which Horace Vernet has introduced to this work that the painter has copied directly from nature, and not developed it as a German artist would do from the depths of his sentiment[2] (*Gemüthe*). A German painter would here perhaps have manifested in the form of the head of the camel the emotional or intellectual, the early worldly—yes, the Old Testamental; but the Frenchman has simply painted a camel as God made it—a superficial camel, on which there

[1] I have seen in Sweden, where they are quite common, long pieces of painted tapestries or hangings, representing invariably scenes from the Bible, and executed in some cases within fifty or sixty years, in which all the characters wear swallow-tail coats, round hats, and knee-breeches or trousers.—*Translator.*

[2] In allusion to a story to which Heine several times refers. An Englishman, a Frenchman, and a German were, in competition for a prize, to paint every one the picture of a camel. The Englishman went to the East and studied all the breeds of camels, mastered the animal in detail, and "made his work" very well. The Frenchman trotted off to the Jardin des Plantes, copied the first camel with great *chique*, threw in the Pyramids and some palm-trees—*v'la!* it was done. But the German, retiring to his study, buried himself in thought, and evolved the transcendental ideal of a camel from the depths of his moral consciousness.—*Translator.*

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is not one symbolical hair, and who, stretching out his head over the shoulder of Judah, regards with the greatest indifference the equivocal transaction. This *insouciance*, this indifference, is a fundamental trait in the picture here in question, and in this too it bears the stamp of our age. The painter has neither dipped his brush into the vitriolic vindictiveness of Voltairean satire (*die ätzenze Böswilligkeit Voltaire'scher Satire*) nor the licentious smut-pots of Parny [1] and Company; he is led neither by polemics nor immorality; the Bible is all the same to him as any other book; he regards it with true tolerance; he has no longer prejudices against the book; he even finds it pleasant and amusing, and does not disdain to borrow subjects from it. In this manner he painted "Judith" and "Rebecca at the Well;" thus it was he painted "Judah and Thamar," an admirable picture, which, owing to its local colour, would be a very suitable altar-

[1] A writer once supposed to be very witty and wicked, but of whose works it might now be said, as it was of *La Religieuse* of Diderôt, that it seemed to be written to show the world to what an extreme degree dulness and silliness could be combined with immorality. The very extensive class who are deluded with the idea that everything is nice which is merely naughty, may find in the French *facetiæ* of the eighteenth century that there are as dreary and wearisome swamps of corruption in literature as there are dry and dismal deserts of theology. *Ab his diris malis, utrisque generis, libera nos Domine!*—*Translator.*

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piece for the new Parisian church of Notre Dame de Lorette, in the *lorette* quarter of the town.[1]

Horace Vernet is regarded by many as the greatest painter in France, and I would not absolutely contradict this popular opinion. He is in any case the most national of French painters, and he surpasses all by his productive ability (*das fructbare Können*), by his vigorously genial (*dämonische*) extravagance, by the ever-blooming self-rejuvenation of his creative force. Painting to him is innate, as spinning to the silkworm, as singing to the bird, and his work seems like results of necessity. There is no style in him but nature, and withal a fecundity which borders on the ridiculous. There is a caricature which represents Horace Vernet riding a high horse at full gallop, brush in hand, by an immensely long canvas, and when he shall have got to the end, the picture will be finished. What an immense number of colossal battle-pieces has he painted of late for Versailles! If the pious legend be true that on the day of resurrection every man

[1] French version—"Dans le quartier de ces dames auxquelles cette église a donné son nom." The lorette was of the *haute volée*, or highest class of Parisian *hetairæ*, and, like her successor the *cocotte*, &c., of insatiable greed and extravagance. "There are," said an American, "great contradictions in the French language. *Modiste* does not mean *modest* by a long shot, and *low-rates* (*lorettes*) stand for high prices, as I am informed."—*Translator.*

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will be followed by his works to the place of judgment,[1] then will Horace Vernet appear on that day in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, accompanied by some hundred thousands of infantry and cavalry. And however terrible the judges may be who will sit there to judge the quick and the dead, I do not believe that Horace Vernet will be condemned to fire eternal for the naughtiness of his Judah and Thamar. I do not believe it; for, firstly, the picture is so admirably painted, that were it but for that the culprit must needs be acquitted. Secondly, Horace Vernet is a genius, and things are permitted to geniuses which are forbidden to common sinners. And finally, unto him who comes marching at the head of some hundreds of thousands of soldiers much will be forgiven, even if he did not chance to be a genius.

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[1] Not a "pious" or Christian legend, as Heine intimates, but manifestly the Mahometan article of strict faith, of which I have often read, and which was told me as a truth by my Muslim friend, Mehemet of Alexandria. It is that on the day of judgment all the pictures or images of human beings whom an artist has made will rise up before him, and he will be condemned for not giving them souls.—*Translator.*

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THE FRENCH STAGE.

CONFIDENTIAL LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO

M. AUGUST LEWALD,

DIRECTOR OF THE DRAMATURGIC REVIEW,
IN STUTTGART.

Written in May 1837 *at a Village near Paris.*

LETTER I.

At last, at last the weather has permitted me to leave Paris and the warm fireplace, and the first hours which I am to pass in the country shall be dedicated to my dear friend. How beautifully the sun shines on my paper and gilds the letters, which will bear to you my most joyous greetings! Yes, winter is fleeting over the mountains, and after him fly the merry mocking breezes of spring like a flock of gay grisettes who are chasing a grey-haired lover with derisive laughter, or it may be with birch twigs. How he pants

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and groans, the white-haired fool![1] How the young girls drive him along without pity before them! How the many-coloured breast-knots flutter and shine; here and there one falls in the field; the violets peer forth and with an anxious joy look at the merry chase. Now the old man is fairly put to flight and nightingales sing a triumphant song. And what they sing is all so fresh and fair. At last we can dispense with the grand opera, Duprez and Meyerbeer; we learned to do without Nourrit long, long ago. Here in this world at last all things can well be spared except the sun and I; for quite without these two I can't imagine spring, nor zephyrs, nor grisettes, nor German literature! Without me all the world would be a gaping naught, a zero's shadow, and the vision of a flea, or even a poem by Karl Streckfuss—nothing more![2]

Yes, it is spring, and I can lay aside my under garment.[3] The small boys have already taken

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[1] *Geck.* Quite the same as the old English provincial *gawk*, still common in America. Original *gecke*, hence *gawky; gawk*, to stare about like a fool.

[2] Heine here indirectly jests on Fichte's "Idealism," as Goethe has done in "Faust." It has sometimes occurred to me that Goethe's fancy was suggested by a passage in the "Edda."

[3] *Unterjacke.* French version—*gilet de coton.* Flannels

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off their coats, and are gambolling in their shirt-sleeves round the giant tree close by the little church for which it serves as tower in which to hang the bell. And now the tree is covered with white blossoms, and looks like a powdered grandfather, who is calmly smiling among the blonde grandchildren who merrily dance around. He often covers them in jest with his white flakes (*Flocken*), and then the boys frolic more gaily than ever. It is sternly forbidden, yes, under whipping penalty, to pull the church bell-rope, but the largest of the boys, who ought to set a good example to the rest, cannot resist the terrible temptation; he pulls at the prohibited cord, and the clock sounds like a warning, scolding voice from grandfather.

Later in summer, when the tree is splendid in all its green luxuriance and the bell is hidden in foliage, its tone has in it something mysterious; it utters strangely subdued tones, and when they are heard, all at once the gaily jargoning birds, who were rocking, cradled on the branches, take to their wings, and, frightened, fly away.

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were not by any means so generally worn in 1838 as at present, although even at that time there was a saying—

"Ye who would the doctor pay,
Leave your flannels off in May!"—*Translator.*

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In autumn, the sound of the bell is deeper, sadder, stranger, and we seem to hear in it a spirit's voice. But it is chiefly when some one is buried that the long-resounding tones have an indescribably mournful echo; at every stroke a few yellow leaves fall from the tree, and this resounding fall of the leaf, this ringing emblem of mortality, filled me once with such irresistible grief, that I wept like a child. That was last year, when Margot buried her husband. He came to grief (*er war verungluckt*) in an unusually high inundation of the Seine. For three days and three nights the poor woman plied the oar, and sought by every bank of the river to find her husband and give him Christian burial, and when found, she herself washed and clothed him, and placed him in his coffin, and in the churchyard once more lifted the lid to gaze upon the dead. She spoke no word, nor dropt a single tear, but her eyes were blood-shot, and I never shall forget the marble face and deep-red eyes!

But now it is fair and fine spring weather, the sun smiles, children shout for joy, perhaps a little louder even than they need to, and I, here in this small village-house, where I passed last year the pleasantest months, will write you a series of letters on the French stage, and therewithal, as you desired of me, will not forget due parallels with ours. The latter task has its

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trouble, for recollections of the German theatre fade from memory with every day. Among the dramatic pieces which have appeared of late, I have seen nothing save two tragedies by Immermann, "Merlin" and "Peter the Great," neither of which could certainly be played, "Merlin" on account of its poetry, and "Peter" because of its politics. And then imagine the face I made when, in this packet which contained the creations of a great poet whom I loved, I found some other volumes also stuffed, which were entitled *Dramatische Werke von Ernst Raupach* (the Dramatic Works of Ernst Raupach).

I knew him by sight, it is true, but I had never read anything by this pet nursling of the directors of the German theatres. I had seen some of his plays upon the stage, but there one does not exactly know whether the author is *executed* by the comedian, or the comedian by the author. Chance now permitted me in foreign lands to read at my leisure some comedies by Doctor Ernst Raupach, but I could not, without great effort, get to the last acts. I pass over his wretched efforts to be witty, for they are, after all, only intended to flatter the public. For the poor stupid devil (*Hecht*) in the *parterre* will say to himself, "Why, I can make jokes like those," and for this gratified vanity he will feel grateful to the author. But the style was to me

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insupportable. I have been so spoiled in this respect; the *bon ton* of conversation, the truly light and graceful language of society, has, owing to my long residence in France, become such an absolute necessity, that in reading the comedies of Doctor Ernst Raupach I really felt extremely ill. His style has in it something so solitary and peculiar, isolated (*abgesondertes*), and unsocial, that it gives one a choking sensation.[1] The conversation in these comedies is feigned; it is always only a ventriloquistic monologue in several voices, a worthless heap of old bachelor thoughts—thoughts which sleep alone, make their own coffee of a morning, shave themselves, go walking out alone before the Brandenburg Gate,

[1] *Das die Brust beklemmt.* I think that every German will agree with me that there is something very *einsam* or solitary in the style of this sentence. It is always very easy to discern where Heine is straining hard for effect, and here he is doing his utmost, without a spark of inspiration, producing such a marvellous illustration of what he is condemning in Raupach, that it forms one of the *magna curiosa* or great curiosities of literature. As regards his singular use of the word *einsam*, I once heard it used in precisely the same sense, and that, too, in criticising a poem, by an old English Gypsy. He told me that the evening before, his sister Gentilla, thinking that she would not live long, passed the evening in singing her death-song—improvised. I asked him what it was like. He replied, "It was a very *lonesome* ditty, *Rya* (master), and" (stretching out his arms as widely as possible to illustrate magnitude), "about a yard and a half long." The reader may find the anecdote in my "English Gypsies."—*Translator.*

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and who pick flowers for themselves. When his women speak, we infer from their expressions that they wear under their muslin, nasty, greasy drawers of "health-flannel," and smell of tobacco and Russia leather.

But the one-eyed man is a king in the country of the blind, and among our bad writers of comedies Raupach is the best. By bad writers of comedies I mean only those poor devils who have their wretched *pièces de manufacture* (*Machwerke*) played under the name of "comedies," or, as they are mostly comedians by calling, act them themselves. But these so-called comedies are in reality only prosaic pantomimes, with traditional masks—stage fathers, villains, court-councillors, chevaliers, the lover, the beloved, soubrettes, mothers, or whatever else they may be called in the contracts of our actors who are only adapted (*abgerichtet*) exactly to similar set parts according to traditional types. Like the Italian mask comedy, our German is one and the same piece infinitely varied.[1] The characters and situations

[1] The Italian characters, which were popular types serving for various plays, such as *Il Capitano Spavento*, *Truffaldina*, *Scaramuccia*, *Tartaglia*, *Brighella*, *Il Dottore*, &c., were engraved by Callot, and are given in full, with descriptive text, in the *Masques et Bouffons* by Maurice Sand. This taste for masked and familiar characters still exists in Italy to such an extent that there are now about 300 small comedies or farces all more or less on the stage in Florence, in every one of which the honest,

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are given, and any one who has a talent for games of combination may undertake to put together these given characters and events and make out of them an apparently new piece, according to the same process followed in a Chinese puzzle, in which different pieces of cut-out, flat pieces of wood, coloured, are so put

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simple *dummklug*, Stentorello, is the principal personage. The lower we descend in society to all-alike people of a limited range of ideas, the better satisfied do we find them with a certain set of well-known types of character, and the less inclined to master new ones. Thus Punch and his troupe cover all the types needed for the street populace of London. It is a curious fact that the development of new *personæ* within original shades of character, which was once so eminently characteristic of English literature, has to a great degree died out in dramatic and novel writing. This is, however, quite in accordance with the age, especially among the "classes," where every form of marked *originality* is regarded as eccentricity, consequently "in bad form," just as in the best Chinese society, where anybody who is markedly different in *any* manner of thought from others is a moral monster. A curious confirmation of this is found in the fact that of late years there have been cases (and they are rapidly increasing) where, in legal trials, the most trifling differences of opinion of a man from his neighbours, or even his being addicted to science or travel, have been advanced and accepted as proofs of insanity, just as Democritus was held by the Abderites to be mad. It was one of Heine's innumerable and admirable original observations that the Philistine, like the bee, runs into types and classes, and is, as a man, inclined to prefer "secondary automatism," or instinct induced by custom, to any original *effort* of understanding, such as is called for by original types. The subject is one of very great interest as a presage of the coming twilight of the gods in art and its renaissance in science.—*Translator.*

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together as to form all kinds of figures. The pettiest minds are often gifted with this talent, while the true poet, who can only move freely, and can only form living conceptions, can do nothing at this wooden work. A few true poets, who undertook the ungrateful task of writing German comedies, did indeed create certain new masks or characters, but the result was collision with the actors, who, accustomed only to the old types, for fear lest their incapacity or laziness should be exposed, made war effectually on the new plays that they never could be performed.[1]

It may be that in the opinion which I have expressed as to the works of Dr. Raupach that there is a secret personal dislike. I once trembled at the sight of him, and *that* is never pardoned by a prince! You look at me with amazement, for you do not find Dr. Raupach so terrible, and are not accustomed to see me

[1] All that Heine here asserts as to popular plays is quite true as regards the vast majority of novels of the present day, in which we simply find old types of humanity adapted to shuffled and cut situations, the exceptions or variations being morbid or æsthete-eccentric characters, the range of which latter is, however, very limited, and is already rapidly becoming known. It is remarkable that this decadence has been closely accompanied with a disappearance from "polite literature" of anything like *genial* humour, and an increased worship of the "wise but feeble," and soulless French stylists.—*Translator.*

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tremble before a living man. And yet it is true that I once experienced before him such terror that my knees began to totter and my teeth to chatter, and to this day I cannot look at the engraving of Ernst Raupach which faces the title-page of his works without feeling my heart beat in my bosom. You stare indeed amazed, dear friend, and I hear by you a feminine voice which says in an inquisitive tone——

But it is a long story, and I have not time to tell it all to-day. And what is more, it would recall to me full many things which I would fain forget; for instance, all the melancholy days I passed in Potsdam, and of the great grief which bound and banned me there to solitude. I walked there, to my very soul alone, in the dead-silent garden Sans Souci, amid the orange-trees where in the olden time great Rampe walked. O Lord! how dull and void of poetry those orange-trees do always seem to me! They look like disguised oak-scrub saplings. And then every tree has its number like a collaborateur on the Brockhaus *Konversationsblatte*, and there is in this numbered nature something so deliberately and cleverly tiresome, so compulsory, as if according to the corporal's stick! (*so korporalstöckig gezwungenes*). It always seems to me as if these orange-trees take snuff like their late master, old Frederick, who was, as you know, a great

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king about the time when Ramler was a great poet. But do not think that I would in aught diminish the fame of great Frederick. I even acknowledge his merits in recognising German poetry. Did he not give a grey horse to Gellert, and five thalers to Madame Karschin? Did he not, in order to advance and aid German literature, write his own wretched poems in French? Had they appeared in German there might have resulted from his high example incalculable injury! The German Muse will never forget this kind service.

I found myself, as before said, in Potsdam, but not in very joyous mood, and thereunto for grief was added this, that my body seemed to be striving with my soul to see which could torment me most. Ah! psychic pain is easier to endure than physical, and if I had to choose between an evil conscience and an aching tooth, I would prefer the former. Ah! there is nothing so horrible as toothache. I learned that in Potsdam, and forgetting all my spiritual griefs, resolved to go at once to Berlin, and there have it out! Yet what a horrible, cruel operation it is! Something in it so like being beheaded! You must sit in a strange chair and keep perfectly still, and quietly await the awful pang! My hair rises on end when I but think thereon! But Providence in its wisdom has ordained all

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things for our benefit, and even the sufferings of man serve in the end to his advantage. Of course toothaches are terrible—intolerable; yet beneficent, foreseeing Providence has bestowed this fearful and intolerable character to make us in our despair rush to the dentist's and have the tooth extracted. For of course nobody would ever make up his mind to endure such an operation, or rather execution, if the toothache were in the least supportable!

You cannot imagine the wretchedness and misery of my mind during the three hours which I passed in the post-coach. When we arrived at Berlin I was utterly broken down, and as no man in the world at such moments thinks of money, I gave the postillion for *pour-boire* twelve good groschen. The fellow looked at me with an air of strange irresolution, because, according to the postal regulation recently established by Herr Nagler, it was sternly forbidden to the postillions to accept fees. He held the twelve-groschen piece for some time in his hand, as if weighing it, and ere he pocketed it said with a sorrowful voice, "I have been postillion for twenty years, and am used to taking 'drink-money,' and now all at once the head post-director forbids us under a heavy penalty to take a tip. But it is an inhuman law, for no man *can* refuse one; it is against nature." I pressed the good man's hand,

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and sadly sighed. Sighing too I entered the hotel, and when I inquired there where I could find a good dentist, the landlord cried joyfully, "That is all right, for a very celebrated dentist from St. Petersburg has just arrived here, and if you will dine at the *table d'hôte* you will see him." "Yes," I thought, "I will take my last hangman's meal before I sit in the poor sinner's seat." [1]

But I had at table no desire to eat. I had hunger without any appetite. Despite my light and easy temperament, I could not banish from my mind the terrors which awaited me in the hour to come. Even my favourite dish of mutton with Teltower turnips disgusted me. My eyes involuntarily sought for the terrible man, the hangman-dentist from St. Petersburg, and, guided by the instinct of agony, I soon selected him from among the other guests. He sat afar from me at the end of the table, and had a pinching and a nipping face—a face like the forceps (*une figure crochue, un profile en tenailles*). He was an evil-boding oddity, in an ashen-grey coat with glittering steel buttons. I hardly dared to look him in the face, and when he brandished a fork it

[1] *Henkersmahlzeit.* Equivalent to the last cup formerly given in England to criminals before their execution. Of which there is a song in the novel of "Jack Sheppard" by Ainsworth.

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seemed to me as if he were coming at my mouth with his jaw-breaker. With trembling terror I averted my eyes from his glance, and would gladly have closed my ears from the sound of his voice. From that sound I noted that he was one of the kind of people who are internally painted all over grey, and have entrails of wood. He spoke of Russia, where he long had dwelt, but where his art had not found full room for development. He conversed with that calm, impertinent reserve which is more intolerable than the loudest braggadocio, and whenever he spoke I felt faint at heart, and my soul trembled. Out of sheer despair I began to converse with the one who sat next to me at table, and turning my back to the Terror, talked so loudly to deafen myself that I at last no longer heard the awful voice. My neighbour was an agreeable man of distinguished air, with most refined manners, and his kind and gentle conversation greatly relieved my suffering state of mind. He was modesty itself; the words flowed softly from his gently arched lips, his eyes were clear and friend-like in expression, and when he heard that I was suffering from toothache he blushed, and offered me his professional services.

"In God's name, who are you then?" I cried.

"I am the dentist Meier from St. Petersburg," was the reply.

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Involuntarily, and almost impolitely, I pushed back my chair from him, and stammered in the greatest embarrassment—

"Who then is that man yonder, he in the ashen-grey coat with shining steel buttons?"

"I do not know," answered my neighbour, looking at me with surprise.

But the waiter, who heard my question, whispered in my ear with an air of great importance—

"That is Herr Raupach, the theatrical poet."

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SECOND LETTER.

. . . . Or is it true that we Germans really cannot produce a good comedy, and are condemned to borrow such poetic creations from the French?

I hear that you in Stuttgart tormented yourselves so long with this question, that at last in despair you set a price on the head of the best comic dramatic poet. As I learn, you yourself, my dear Lewald, are one of the jury, and that the bookselling firm of J. G. Cotta locked you up, without beer or tobacco, until you should have pronounced your dramatic verdict. At least you got from that experience the subject for a good comedy.

Nothing is more untenable than the reasons which are generally alleged to support the question here submitted. It is asserted, for instance, that the Germans have no good comedy because they are a serious race, while the French, on the contrary, being merry folk, are therefore more gifted for such writing. The proposition is utterly false. The French are by no means a gay and cheerful people. On the contrary, I begin to believe

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that Laurence Sterne was quite right when he asserted that they are much too serious. And yet in those days when Yorick wrote his "Sentimental Journey" there still flourished all the light-footed frivolity and perfumed *fadaise* of the *ancien régime;* the French had not yet taken from the guillotine and from Napoleon the necessary lessons in reflection. And even of late, since the Revolution of July, what wearisome dismal progress they have made in seriousness, or at least in unjoyousness! Their faces have grown longer, the corners of their mouths drawn downward more reflectively; they have learned from us philosophy and smoking tobacco. Since that time there has been a great change in the French; they no longer look like themselves. Nothing is wretcheder than the twaddle of our Teutomaniacs, who, when they revile the French, have always in mind the Frenchmen of the Empire whom they have seen in Germany. They never reflect that this volatile race, whose inconstancy they have so long zealously attacked, could remain constant in feeling as in thought for twenty years.

No, they are not more cheerful than we, for we Germans have perhaps more sense and susceptibility for the comic than the French, for we are the people of *humour*. Add to this that we find in Germany better subjects for laughter,

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more really laughable and ridiculous characters than in France, where the *persiflage* of society kills in the bud every extraordinary or droll oddity, and where no really original fool or jester (*Narr*) can develop and complete himself unhindered. A German may declare with pride that it is only on German soil that fools flourish and grow to that stupendous, Titanic height of which a flattened-out, suppressed French fool has no conception. Only Germany can produce those colossally comic clowns whose bell-caps reach and ring in heaven on high, and delight the stars with their jingling. Let us not ignore the merits of our fellow-countrymen, and pay homage to foreign folly. Let us be just to our own native land!

It is also an error to ascribe the sterility of our German Thalia to a want of free air, or, if you will excuse the rash word, to the want of political freedom. For what is called political liberty is not at all necessary for the success of comedy. We have only to recall Venice, where, in spite of "the leads" [1] and secret drownings, Goldoni and Gozzi still wrote their masterpieces; or Spain, where, notwithstanding the absolute axe and the orthodox fire, the most charming

[1] Chambers under the leaden roof of the buildings of St. Mark in Venice, which were used as prisons.—*Translator.*

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"cloak-and-sword" pieces were produced; or think of Molière, who wrote under Louis XIV. Why, even China has excellent comedies. . . .

No, it is not the political condition which determines the development of comedy in a people, and this I would circumstantially prove, were it not that I should, by so doing, find myself in a field which I much prefer to avoid. Yes, my dearest friend, I have a real horror of politics, and go ten steps out of my way when I encounter a political thought, even as if it were a mad dog. When, lost in the labyrinth of my ideas, such a thought meets me unforeseen, then I at once repeat the spell. . . .

Do you know, dearest friend, the spell which must be pronounced when we meet a mad dog? I knew it in my early boyhood, and learned it then from the old chaplain, Asthöver. When in walking we see a dog whose tail is drawn in in a suspicious manner, then we must say at once:—

"O hound, thou hound,
Thou art not sane or sound;
Accurst thou shalt be
To all eternity:
From thy bite,
Lord Saviour Jesus, guard me day and night. Amen."

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[1] "O Hund, du Hund,
Du bist nicht gesund;

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Even as I dread politics, I have a boundless fear of theology, which has drenched and soaked me in sorrow. I let myself be no longer tempted by Satan; I refrain from all reflections on Christianity, and am no longer such a fool as to wish to convert Hengstenberg and his company to faith in worldly pleasures. For all I care, these miserable wretches may eat thistles instead of pine-apples to the end of their days, and chastise and mortify their flesh—*tant mieux.* I would like myself to supply the rods for the purpose. Theology has brought me to sorrow; you know by what a misunderstanding it came about. You know how I, without solicitation, was appointed by the Diet to Young Germany,[1] and how I unto this day have in vain prayed for my dismissal. In vain I write the humblest petitions; in vain do I declare that I no longer believe in any of my

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Du bist vermaledeit
In Ewigkeit;
Von deinem Biss
Behüte mich mein Herr und Heiland Jesus Christ. Amen."

Many of these incantations, some of which are of early heathen origin, are still current among the peasantry not only of Germany, but even in Pennsylvania.—*Translator.*

[1] *Beim jungen Deutschland angestellt wurde.* Heine was officially described as its leader, but in his letters he appears as flying from the party which pursued him, praying him to be its chief. On the whole, he appears to have played fast and loose with it, as he did with most things.—*Translator.*

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religious errors. Naught avails. I do not, indeed, ask for any great pension, but only to be superannuated (*in Ruhestand gesetzt werden*). Dearest friend, you could do me a great favour if you would, when the opportunity presents itself, accuse me in your journal of obscurantism and servilism;[1] it might be of great service to me. As regards my enemies, I have no occasion to beg any such service of them; they will slander me with the greatest possible obligingness.

I have remarked that as the French, among whom comedy flourishes more than with us, do not derive this advantage from their political freedom, it may be permitted to me to point out somewhat more in detail how it is rather to certain social conditions that comic dramatists owe their supremacy in France.

You know what I mean by social conditions. They are the manners and customs, the doing and letting be done (*das Thun und Lassen*), the whole public as well as private impulse of a race, so far as the predominant views of life are expressed by them. The French comic dramatist

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[1] Old fogeyism and toadying are not elegant terms, but slang here expresses the author's real meaning more rigorously and accurately than the choicest licensed expressions could have done. More than two pages are omitted in the French version after the ending of this sentence, or till the words, "I have already said that in France."

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seldom employs the public active life as chief material; he only uses certain incidents in it; from this soil he only plucks now and then a few quaint flowers, with which he enwreaths the mirror from whose ironically cut and polished facets laughs and glitters the domestic life of the French. Those are, indeed, distorted images which this mirror shows, but, as everything among the French is exaggerated to the very extreme and to caricature, such images still give us the unpitying truth, if not that of to-day, yet still the truth as it may be to-morrow. Such dramatists find a greater source of subjects in the contrasts of many old institutions with modern customs, or of the latter with the private opinions which people have of them. But what are most profitable are the contrasts which appear so amusing when the noble enthusiasm which flames up so lightly with the French, and is as lightly quenched, comes into collision with the positive industrial tendencies of the time. Here we stand on a ground where that great female despot, the Revolution, has exercised for fifty years her arbitrary power, tearing down here, sparing there, but shaking violently everywhere at the foundations of social life; and this rage for equality which cannot raise the lowly, but only lay level the lofty, this quarrel of the present with the past, who mutually mock one

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another—the anger of a madman at a ghost—this overthrow of all authorities, be they of spirit or material, this stumbling over their last relics, and this want of wit in the stupendous hours of fate, when the great need of stern authority is plain as the day to every one—when the destroyer, scared at his own work, begins for very agony to sing, and then at last bursts into laughter wild—yes, it is fearful, even horrible, but for a comedy, most excellent!

But here a German begins to feel uncomfortable. By the eternal gods! we should thank our Lord and Saviour daily that we have no comedy like that of the French, that we have none of those flowers which only bloom on hills of potsherds and heaps of ruin,[1] such as French society consists of. The French writer of comedy seems to me at times to be like a monkey who sits on the ruins of some ancient city and makes grimaces, and raises grinning laughter when he espies among the broken ogives of a cathedral the head of a real fox peeping out, and the sow brings forth her young in what was once the boudoir of a royal mistress, or when the ravens meet in solemn council on the leads of the Guildhall, or when the hyenas dig up and gnaw the ancient bones from regal tombs. . . .

[1] Such as that of Monte Testaccio in Rome, which consists entirely of fragments of broken pottery.—*Translator.*

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I have already said that in France the leading *motives* of comedy are borrowed not from public life, but from the inner life of the people, and here the relations between man and wife furnish the most fertile theme. In the French family, as in all the other relations of life, all bonds are broken and all authority overthrown. That paternal influence on son and daughter is destroyed is easily understood when we reflect on the corrosive power of that criticism which resulted from the Materialistic philosophy. This want of reverence (*Pietät*) shows itself more glaringly in the relation between man and wife, either in the marital or extra-marital alliances, which here assume a character which specially adapts them to comedy. Here is the original stage of all those wars between the sexes which are only known in Germany by bad translations or imitations, and which a German may possibly or barely describe as a Polybius, but never as a Cæsar. The pair indeed make war in every land, but specially they fight as man and wife. In every country, too, as in France, freedom of action is wanting to women; therefore, as it must be conducted more secretly, cannot come openly and dramatically to view. Elsewhere women barely bring it so far as to a small *émeute*, or at the most an insurrection; but here the two married powers stand opposed

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with equal military resources and wage their most terrible domestic battles. In the uniformity of your German life you are much amused in the German theatre at seeing such a campaign of the two sexes, in which one seeks to subdue the other by strategic arts, secret ambush, nightly surprise, ambiguous truces, or even by propositions of eternal peace. But when one is here in France on the very field of battle itself, where such things do not merely appear, but are practically carried out, and if he has a German heart in his breast—all pleasure oozes away at seeing the best French comedy. Ah! for a long time I have no longer laughed at Arnal when he, with such delightful *niaiserie*, plays the cuckold, nor at Jenny Vert-pré when she, displaying all the most exquisite graces as a *grande dame*, dallies and fondles with the flowers of adultery. Neither do I laugh at Mademoiselle Dejazet, who, as you know, can play the part of a grisette so perfectly, with such classical insolence and divine licentiousness (*Liederlichkeit*). Heavens! how many dire defeats in virtue must this damsel have endured ere she rose to such triumphs in *art!* She is perhaps the best actress in France.[1] How admirably she

[1] I saw Dejazet when she reappeared on the stage in 1848, and her performances were such as to fully justify Heine in his praise of her talent, while in other respects they were even more remarkable. For though she was now beyond sixty, her extra-

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plays "Fretillon," or a poor *modiste* who by the liberality of a rich lover all at once sees herself surrounded by all the luxury of a great lady; or a little washermaid who for the first time listens to the tender speeches of a *carabin* (in German, *Studiosus Medicinæ*), and allows him to accompany her to the *bal champêtre de la Grande Chaumière*.[1] Ah! that is all very pretty and merry,

ordinary physique and preservation of youthful activity and energy were such that she played and looked to perfection the parts of girls of seventeen. The *rôle* of Mademoiselle de Choisy is a much more artistic, delicate, and difficult one than the parts mentioned by Heine, it being throughout ambiguous, a boy in it believing himself to be a girl, and attracted by strange feelings, which he cannot comprehend, to a fair maid who shares these mysterious longings. "Impropriety," or all that Swinburne's rosiest ballads intimate, was developed in this comedy by the great actress to the very utmost, but without a single immoral word or "overt act." As the audience were all aware that the *artiste* was personally and in private life deeply initiated into the mysteries hinted at, there were of course many situations where the superhuman effrontery of Mademoiselle Dejazet and the intelligence of her auditors combined to produce roars of laughter, such as would have been utterly incomprehensible to a stranger. Add to this an indescribable and peculiar grace in every movement, constant novelty and freshness, with marvellous *intonation* of voice, and we have a truthful sketch of this great actress who has never been approached since her time, even at a great distance, by any one in *espiègle* comedy. A Dejazet would now be as great an impossibility on any European stage as a Taglioni.—*Translator.*

[1] A famous resort for students in the Forties. It was commemorated in a very popular song:—

"Messieurs les étudiants,
Montez à la Chaumière,

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and people laugh at it; but I, when I secretly reflect where all this comedy really ends—that is, in the sinks of prostitution, in the hospitals of Saint-Lazare, and on the tables of anatomy, where the *carabin* not unfrequently sees his late companion in love dissected for the advantage of science—then the laugh is stifled in my throat, and did I not fear that I should appear as a fool before the most highly cultivated public in the world, I would not restrain my tears.[1]

Pour y danser le cancan,
Et la Robert Macaire!
Toujours—toujours
La nuit comme aux jours,
Et roupiou piu, la ral a ral la."—*Translator.*

[1] Our author here appears to be either slightly canting or misled by a common error. We should always admit the *truth*, whether it clashes with what we have been taught to believe or not, and extensive researches have certainly proved that the "sinks" or gutters, hospitals and dissecting-table, &c., are by no means the final destiny of a very great majority of "social evils." A very pious and benevolent Presbyterian clergyman, who had passed many years in ameliorating the condition of the poor in a very large city, and who was perfectly familiar with thousands of the most degraded class, once said to me, "Though it seems a terrible thing for me to admit, I must honestly declare that, taking all things into consideration, the great majority of fallen women do actually, in the end, from a merely temporal point of view, better their condition in life. This great majority are born of the poorest class, or that in which they now live; they nearly all have relations who sponge on them, and however wretched they may seem to us, they are far better fed and clad than most poor girls who work honestly for a living. When

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See, dear friend, that is the secret curse of exile, that we never feel exactly like ourselves or as brave in the air of a foreign land, and that, with the manners of thought and of feeling which we have brought from home, we are always isolated among people who do not feel and think as we do, and that we are continually pained by moral, or rather *immoral*, incidents and things with which the native has long been familiar and at ease; yes, as regards which he has become as used as to the natural products of his land. Ah! the spiritual climate is as uncongenial as the

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they find their youth passing away, they have no difficulty in marrying some man, neither better nor worse than themselves, who has a home and who wants a housekeeper." These are very literally the words of the man most deeply experienced in the lives of such women whom I ever knew, and I certainly never met one who was more honest, while shrewd and intelligent. He added that it is absolutely the *very worst* side only of such lives which is known to the better class, also the fact that the weak-minded among the poor generally "go to the bad," with or without this special form of vice, while the more intelligent learn a great deal from their experience of the world, or enough to finally settle in some condition or calling which supports them decently. The only remark of my own which I have to offer is that the world attributes *entirely* to lust or drink a state of wretchedness of which nine-tenths or more is due to poverty alone, or in many cases to that weakness and want of will which is sure to lead its subject astray in some direction. Our author's assertion that the medical student "not infrequently" finds his late mistress dead in the dissecting-room is an absurdity quite in keeping with the rest of the remarks on the subject.—*Translator.*

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physical—in fact, one can much more readily reconcile himself to the latter, and at the worst it is the body, and not the soul, which suffers thereby.[1]

A revolutionary frog who would gladly rise from his native mud and water, and who regards the life of birds in the air as the ideal of freedom, could not, for all that, endure existence in a dry state or in the so-called free air, and would certainly soon sigh for the good substantial swamp where he was born. At first, on land, he puffs himself well out, and gaily greets the sun which shines so bright all in July, and says unto himself, "I am far, far above my native folk, the fish, stockfish, and all dumb aquatic things, for Jove has given me the gift of speech.

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[1] Here we certainly have cant "straight" and undiluted. Heine indeed made the utmost out of his being an exile; it was as "a poor exiled poet" that he took a pension, but as for leaving Paris or returning to his dear native land, one might as well have proposed to him, or to Baron Rothschild, to settle in Judæa. And, for a professed cosmopolite, such wailing is certainly very inconsistent. But drollest of all is his sad complaint that he cannot reconcile himself to the frightful habits and immorality of French life, to its dreadful grisettes and acquiescing actresses, *et toute la compagnie*. This, while the poor exile was all the while living with one of these graceful-graceless creatures, is indeed touching! The truth is that the exile was really more familiar and fond with such frightful foreign "phenomena" than he gives himself credit for being.—*Translator.*

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Yes, I can sing, and therefore am allied unto the birds; all that I want is wings."

Poor frog! if he had wings he would not soar; flying, he'd lack the lightness of the bird, his eyes, despite him, ever seek the earth. From this height all that is wretched, all that is miserable here in this earthly vale of misery would be for the first time all visible, and the poor, feathered, flying frog would feel far greater suffering than he ever did in the old familiar German swamp.[1]

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[1] Our author's assertions in this letter that he does not belong to Young Germany, that his whole soul is averse to French immorality, and, in short, that he is in no respect what he is supposed to be, recall the fact that in a very remarkable little book, *Heinrich Heine der Unsterbliche*, or "Heine the Immortal," by D. Hornung (1859), the soul of the poet, evoked by a spiritualist, declares that he is now happy in heaven, because he was always *true to himself*. If this be so, verily no man living need despair of eternal bliss.—*Translator.*

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THIRD LETTER.

My head is wild and waste. I have not been able to sleep all last night. I rolled continually in my bed, and as continually rolled in my head the thought, "Who was the masked executioner who beheaded Charles the First at Whitehall?"[1]

It was not till toward morning that I fell asleep, and then I dreamed again that it was night, and I stood on the Pont Neuf in Paris, and looked adown into the dark rolling Seine. And there came out from below, from between the pillars of the bridge, naked men, hidden in the water to their hips, and they held flaming lamps in their hands, and seemed to seek for

[1] This fancy of the hollow or unearthly voice which asks an unmeaning question, I first met in an English tale of about 1832, in which a ghostly vision ends with the mysterious words, "Did Thurialma rise again?" But Heine's question, as here given, undoubtedly suggested to Reybaud in *Jerome Paturôt*, "Whose was that *head*, and whose that *hand*?" which is also awfully unmeaning. Heine here suggests Mr. Dick.—*Translator.*

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something. They looked up at me with meaning glances, and I nodded again to them as if there were a secret mysterious intelligence between us. And *then* the great bell of Notre Dame rang, and I awoke. And now, for an hour, I have been trying to recall what it was that the naked people were looking for under the Pont Neuf. I believe that I knew in my dream what it was, but now I have forgotten it.

The brilliant gleam of the morning mist [1] promises a fine day. The cock crows. The old invalid soldier who lives near us sits already before his door singing his songs of Napoleon. His grandson, a child with blonde locks, is also afoot with his little bare legs, and now stands before my window, a bit of sugar in his hand, with which he pretends to feed my roses. A sparrow comes tripping up on his small toes and looks at the child with curious surprise. But the mother, a beautiful peasant woman, comes hurriedly, and catching up the child, carries him into the house, lest he should take cold in the early morning air.

And I take up my pen to scribble my confused ideas as to the French theatre in still more confused style. In this written wilderness, my dear friend, there will hardly be anything edify-

[1] French version—"Les brillants nuages du matin."

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ing. To you, oh teacher of dramatic art (*Dramaturg*), who know the theatre in all its phases, and see into the inner hearts of comedians, even as God sees into ours; to you who have lived and loved and lost upon the boards which mean the world, as God himself *did* in this greater world, to you I can tell nothing new as regards the French or German theatre. I only venture here to throw out fleeting remarks which may deserve from you an approving nod.

Therefore I hope that what I wrote in my last letter on French comedy met with your approbation. The moral relation and agreement, or rather disagreement, between man and wife is here the dunghill which so richly fertilises the soil of comedy. Marriage, or rather adultery, is the central point whence are let fly all those comic rockets which shoot so brilliantly on high, but which leave behind them a melancholy darkness, if not a vile smell. The old Catholic Christian religion, which sanctioned marriage and threatened the unfaithful spouse with hell, has been extinguished with hell-fire itself. Morality, which is nothing else but religion passed into manners and customs, has by this lost all its vital roots, and now twines miserably faded on the dry sapling poles of reason which have been put in the place of religion. But even this poor, rootless moral system, which is only based on

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reason, is not properly respected here, and society regards only *convenances* or the mere appearance of morality, the obligation of a careful avoidance of all that which might cause a public scandal; I say a public, not a private one, for all that is scandalous which does not come to light does not exist for society, which only punishes sin in cases where people talk too loudly. And even then there are amiable mitigations. The lady sinner is not truly damned until her husband utters sentence on her. The folding-doors of every French salon open wide to the most notorious Messalinas so long as the conjugal ram (*Hornvieh*) trots patiently by her side. But, on the other hand, the young girl who madly yet nobly and generously throws herself into the arms of a lover, and makes for him woman's greatest sacrifice (*weiblich aufopferungsvoll in die Arme wirft*), is for ever banned and banished from society. But this seldom happens, firstly, because maidens here never love, and, secondly, because when they do, they try to get husbands as soon as possible, in order to enjoy that freedom which custom only grants to married dames.

And it is in this the difference consists. With us in Germany, as in England and other Germanic countries, girls are allowed the greatest possible freedom, while married women pass into a state of most absolute dependence under the

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most painfully severe guardianship of their husbands.[1]

But here in France, as I have said, the contrary is the case, and young girls remain in cloister-like seclusion or reserve (*Eingezogenheit*) until they either marry or are taken into society under the strictest guard of some one near of kin.[2] In "the world"—that is, in a French salon—they always sit silent and little heeded, for it is here neither in good form nor sensible to pay attention to or flirt with a young lady.

And there it is. We Germans, like our Germanic neighbours, offer our homage and our love only to unmarried maids, and our poets only sing of them; but with the French, on the contrary, be it in life or in art, the married woman is the only subject of love.[3]

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[1] Heine rivalled American young ladies in his excessive indulgence in superlatives, which often led him unconsciously to exaggeration and untruth. The reader may have observed that by far too many subjects were to him the *most* exquisite or *most* infamous conceivable; the result being very naturally the impression that he was over-susceptible, and, like a child, regarded whatever was nearest to him as greatest. Even in America girls are nowhere allowed *the greatest possible freedom*, while as for Germany, the restrictions of this kind are far greater than in England, and were much more so fifty years ago. There are very great differences in "Germanic lands" in this respect.—*Translator.*

[2] Omitted in the French version.

[3] There was even in Heine's time a novel entitled "The

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I have here pointed out a fact which establishes a fundamental difference between German and French tragedy. The heroines of German tragedies are always maids; in those of France they are married women; and the complicated relations which result from it open, it may be, a wider field for action and passion.

It would never occur to me to praise French or German tragedy at the expense of the other. The literature and art of every land are subject to local limitations which must not be lost sight of when we would appreciate them. The merit of German tragedies like those of Goethe, Schiller, Kleist, Immermann, Grabbe, Oehlenschläger, Uhland, Gillparzer, Werner, and similar great poets, consists more in poetry than in action (*Handlung*) or "treatment" and passion. But however exquisite the poetry may be, it makes more impression on the solitary reader than on a great audience.[1] That which acts most impres-

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Elective Affinities" by one Goethe, and quite a literature of minor works in prose and verse, from which no foreigner could fail to conclude that Germans, like all other weak and sinful mortals, "now and then, if not oftener," broke the seventh commandment, and "the better the society, the more frequent were the breaches." Even in Canning's time, to "chop and change ribs, *à la mode* Germanorum," was proverbial in England. —*Translator.*

[1] The solitary reader who appreciates the text is in nineteen cases out of twenty a genius or a person of refined susceptibility;

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sively in a theatre on the mass of the public is simply action and passion, and the French writers of tragedy excel in these. The French are by nature more active and passionate than we, and it is difficult to decide whether it is innate activity which causes passion to manifest itself more in them than in us, or whether inborn passion gives to their acts a more ardent character, and imparts to their lives a more dramatic form than ours, whose ever-silent waters flow in the enforced channel of habit and custom, and manifest far greater depth below than billows breaking wildly on the surface. In short, life in France is more dramatic, and the theatre, that mirror of life, here manifests action and passion in the highest degree.

Passion, as it acts in French tragedy, is an incessant storm of feelings, a continual alternation of thunder and lightning, an eternal fever of raging sensibility,[1] and it is as accurately

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the "great audience," on the contrary, as a rule consists of Philistines, nineteen out of twenty of whom are satisfied or delighted with acting which would be intolerable to the cultivated reader. Heine, as a great many instances prove, lacked to a great degree what is perhaps the first qualification of a critic—the instinct or art of considering an idea in all its lights and from all sides before advancing it.

[1] Yet Voltaire was of the opinion that in his time there was a great want of true passion in the drama. He says (*Des Divers Changements Arrives à l'Art Tragique, Mélanges Littéraires*, vol.

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adapted to the taste of the French public, as it is to those of the German, that the author shall first deliberately set forth the motive of the passion, and then bring in between the storms intervals of calm repose, so that we may be excited or moved comfortably and at our ease. There sit in a German *parterre* peace-loving citizens and Government officials, who would digest their sour-kraut in peace, while above, in the balcony boxes, are the blue-eyed daughters of the better class, beautiful blonde souls, who have brought with them their knitting, and who would fain indulge in gentle visions and emotions without missing a stitch. And all the audience have that great German virtue which is born in us, or unto which we are trained or taught—that of patience. And we also go to the theatre to criticise the play of the actors, or, as we express it, the rendering of the artists.[1] But a Frenchman goes to see the play and to be excited; the actors are forgotten in the piece, and little do we hear men speak of them. Restlessness drives men to such

ii.), "Il nous a presque toujours manqué un degré de chaleur; nous avions tout le reste. L'origine de cette langueur, de cette faiblesse monotone, venait en partie de ce petit esprit de galanterie, si cher alors aux courtisans et aux femmes qui a transformé le théâtre en conversations de Clélie." Heine here confounds passion with ranting.—*Translator.*

[1] *Die Leistungen der Künstler.* French version—*L'accomplissement de leur mission artistique,* which is a shade better.

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resorts, and calm is the last thing which they require. Should the author give him an instant's repose, he would be capable of "calling Azor," which means in German to hiss the play.

What is chiefly important to a French theatrical poet is that his public shall never come to itself or its senses; that emotions shall rapidly follow, like blows on blows, or shock on shock; that love, hatred, jealousy, ambition, pride, *point d'honneur*—in fact, all the passionate feelings which constantly rage unchained in the real life of the French, shall burst forth on the stage in wilder rage.[1]

But to know in a French play whether the exaggeration of passion is too great and far

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[1] Few of the younger generation can have any conception of the extent to which such acting was carried in France at the time when Heine wrote. I once saw a play which was almost entirely sustained by one woman, a very eminent actress, in which for three hours there was such an unbroken series of agonies, declamations, faintings, paroxysms, showers of tears, heartrending maternal passion, convulsions of terror, woes, horrors, and screams, that the whole seemed incredible, simply from a physical point of view. It was all, however, very tiresome. It is remarkable that both in such moral-mental and gymnastic performances, women excel men so far as feats of mere endurance are concerned. I have seen the dancing-girls in Egypt keep up for hours together, apparently without fatigue, such tricks as would utterly exhaust any male European athlete. These women drank incredible quantities of spirits while thus posturing and performing, yet were not intoxicated.—*Translator.*

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beyond all bounds, one should have the deepest knowledge of that French life itself which served the poet as example. To submit French pieces to proper criticism, we must measure them by French, and not by German rule. The passions which seem to be utterly overdone when we see them played or read of them in a quiet corner of calm Germany, are perhaps true to the life here, and what appears so horribly unnatural in theatric guise may happen daily and hourly in Paris in the most ordinary reality. No, it is simply impossible in Germany to form any idea of this French frenzy of passion. We see its deeds, we hear its words; but these deeds and words astonish us, and awaken in us, perhaps, a vague presentiment, but certainly do not give us an exact knowledge of the feelings which they express or from which they spring. He who would truly know what burning is must really put his hand into the fire; the sight of others' burns is not enough, and least of all do we learn the effect of flame by what we are told by others or from books. Those who live at the North Pole of society have no conception how easily hearts are inflamed in the torrid zone of French life, or how, during the days of July, heads are heated by the maddest sunstrokes. Listen to their cries and see their grimaces when such flames scorch their brains and hearts, and then we Germans are

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amazed, and shake our heads and declare that it is all unnatural and unreasonable.[1]

And as we Germans cannot comprehend the ceaseless storm and pressure of passion, even so unintelligible to the French is the quiet home-life, this dream-existence of presentiment and memories, which constantly presents itself in the most passionate poems of Germany. Men who only think of the day and live for the present as if it were everything, and therefore turn it to account with incredible security and certainty, have no conceptions of the manner of feeling of a race which ever recalls the past and forebodes the future, but knows not how to seize the present in love or in politics. They regard with amazement us Germans, who often look for seven years into the blue eyes of a beloved before we venture to pass an arm around her waist. And they are surprised to see us thoroughly study the whole history of the French Revolution, with all its commentaries, and wait for the last supplementary volumes before we translate the work into German, or before we publish a superb edition

[1] As they well might, if this be a description of an extreme case of sunstroke. According to my experience, the sufferers fall into insensibility, and if not promptly relieved, die. However, there are many sad instances in which insanity manifests itself subsequently.—*Translator.*

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of the "Rights of Man," with a dedication to the King of Bavaria.[1]

"Oh hound! thou hound!
Thou art not sane or sound;
Accurst thou shalt be
To all eternity;
From thy bite,
Lord Jesus, guard me day and night. Amen!"

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[1] French version—*Avant de faire éprouver à un Cumberland.* Though this letter rolls a little unsteadily, like a crank ship in a chopping sea, the vessel gets into a fine harbour at last with the happy reflection that it is the great characteristic of the Germans that they think more about the past and the future than the French, with the just inference that they are consequently both more elevated and also profounder in thought. The very same idea in very different form is given by Sainte-Beuve as follows: "Tout ce qu'il faut de travail, d'étude, de talent, de merite et de meditation pour composer même une erreur, tout cela ramène aussi à une pensée plus sevére a la pensée d'une force supreme" (M. Guizot, *Causeries de Lundi*, vol. i.). That is, that seeking far and wide with serious meditation leads to the greatest results.—*Translator.*

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FOURTH LETTER.

. . . THE Lord will manage all things for the best. He, without whose will no sparrow falls to the ground, and no Court-Councillor Karl Streckfuss writes any poems—he, I say, will not leave the fate of whole nations to the caprice of the most miserable short-sightedness. Well do I know, and that most certainly, that he who once led the children of Israel with such miraculous power out of Egypt, out of the land of castes and of deified oxen or asses, will also show his artistic feats to the Pharaohs of this our time. He will from time to time drive back into their bounds the arrogant Philistines, even as he did under the Judges. And the new Babylonian whore, how he will treat her to kicks! Dost thou behold it—the great will of God? It sweeps through the air like the silent secret of a telegraph, which, high above our heads, imparts its announcements, while the uninitiated below live in the tumult of the noisy mart, and never perceive that their most weighty interests, be they of war or peace, are being treated all

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invisibly in heights above. When one of us by chance looks to that height, and if he be well learned in the signs upon the towers, warns the multitude of coming evil, then that man is called an idle dreamer and they laugh at him. But full often worse befalls, and those who are warned blame him for his bad news and stone him. And often, too, they put him as a prisoner in the tower until the prophecy shall be fulfilled, and then he may wait long till it comes to pass. For the blessed Lord always does what he has discovered and determined is for the best, but he does not hasten.

O Lord! I know that thou art wisdom itself and justice, and that what thou dost is ever just and wise. But, I pray thee, do what thou wilt a little more quickly. Thou art eternal and hast time enough, but I am only mortal and I die.[1]

This morning, my dear friend, I am of a marvellously mild and tender disposition. The spring weather exercises a strange influence on me. During the day I am as if benumbed and my soul slumbers; but I am so excited by night that I do not fall asleep till towards morning, and then the most torturing yet rapturous dreams twine about me. O agonising

[1] The preceding paragraphs are omitted in the French version.—*Translator.*

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happiness! with what pain didst thou press me to thy heart a few hours ago! I dreamed of her whom I will not, should not love, though the passion secretly charms me. It was in her country-house, in the little dimly-lighted chamber where the wild oleander trees rose above the window on the balcony. The window was open, and the bright full moon shone into the room, and threw its silver stripes over her white arms which held me lovingly embraced. We sat in silence, thinking only on our sweet misery. The shadows of the trees waved on the wall, and their perfume grew more and more perceptible. Then there sounded in the garden, at first as if afar and then nearer, the long, long drawn notes of a violin, now sad, anon merrily cheerful, often with sorrowful sobbing, at times angry, but always lovely, beautiful, and true. "Who is that?" I softly whispered. And she replied, "It is my brother who plays the violin." Then the violin was suddenly silent, and we heard in its place the melting echoing melody of a flute, and it sounded so imploringly, so beseechingly, so bleedingly, and there were in it such mysterious wails, which filled the soul with insane shuddering and thoughts of life without love, death without resurrection, and of tears which cannot be wept. "Who is that?" I again asked. And she replied, "It is my husband playing the flute."

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And, my dear friend, awaking is even worse than dreaming.

How happy Frenchmen are! *Que les Français sont heureux!* They never dream. I have inquired accurately on the subject, and this fact explains why they do their daily work with such wide-awake confidence, and never lose themselves in cloudy twilight thoughts and feelings, be it in art or life. In the tragedies of our great German poets the dream plays a great part,[1] of which French dramatists have no conception. But such foreboding conceptions or presentiments (*Ahnung*) they never have. What there is of the kind in later French literature is due neither to the natures of poets or the public; it has only been *felt after* the Germans—indeed, only pitifully stolen. For the French do not limit themselves to plagiarising thoughts alone; they pilfer not merely our poetic figures and images, ideas and views, but they steal our deepest feelings, moods,

[1] French version—"Dans les tragédies de nos grands poëtes allemands, le songe, la rêverie, le pressentiment jouent un rôle important." It is certainly true, at least so far as my own knowledge goes, that dreaming is not developed among the French to the degree which it is among Northern races. I have read a large French work on the subject. I forget the name of its author, who had, however, extensively investigated the subject in France, and I inferred from it that dreaming has not among the French anything like the extent or variety of form which it assumes with us.—*Translator.*

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spiritual conditions and most peculiar sentiments. This occurs, for instance, when any of their writers affect or hypocritically imitate the sentimental rubbishy ravings of the Romantic Catholic school of the time of the Schlegels.

The French, with few exceptions, cannot deny or lie away their education; they are all more or less materialists, according to the degree in which they have had more or less of that French education which is a result of the materialistic philosophy. Therefore the charm of *naïveté*, genial feeling, (*Gemüth*), knowledge by intuitive perception, and the passing into subjects perceived is denied to their poets.[1] They have only reflection, passion, and sentiment.

Yes, I would here suggest something which would much avail in judging of many a German author. Sentimentalism is a result of materialism. The materialist has really in his soul the dim consciousness that, after all, everything in the world is not mere matter, and though his limited understanding demonstrates ever so convincingly the materiality of all things, his feelings still resist it, and there steals over him ever and

[1] *Das Aufgehen im angeschauten Gegenstande.* The identification of ourselves with the true inner life or nature of the subject. Heine here need not laugh at Jacob Böhme. French version—"La faculté de s'identifier avec la nature." Which is very good for French.

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anon in silent hours a mysterious desire or secret *need* to find in things something primevally spiritual, and these vague longings and desires produce that obscure susceptibility which we call sentimentalism. Sentimentalism is the doubting or despairing state of matter which, dissatisfied with itself, yearns as if in dreams for something better in obscure feeling. And I, in fact, have found that the sentimental authors *vus en négligé*, seen familiarly at home, or when wine had loosed their tongues, loosely uttered their materialism in the coarsest jests (*Zoten*). But the sentimental tone, especially when it is trimmed with patriotic, morally religious, beggarly thoughts, passes among the masses for the sign of a beautiful pure soul.[1]

France is the country of materialism; it shows itself in all the manifestations of public or private life. Many gifted minds seek, it is true, to extirpate its roots, but these efforts only lead to still more deplorable results. Into the loosened soil falls the seed-corn of those spiritual errors, whose poison aggravates the social condition of France in a most evil manner.[2]

I become every day more anxious from fore-

[1] *Schöne Seele.* French version—"Passe auprès de la masse pour le signe d'un naturel chaste et noble."

[2] "Dont lés fruits vénéneux répandent leurs funestes exhalaisons sur la France."

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seeing the crisis to which this social condition of France may lead. If the French reflected in the least on the future, they could never enjoy another instant's peace. And indeed it is with little peace of mind that they rejoice over it. They do not sit calmly or easily at the banquet of life, but gulp down in haste the delicious food, swallow at a draught the dainty drinks, and cannot enjoy the meal in comfort. They put me in mind of the old woodcut in our family Bible, where the children of Israel, before the exodus from Egypt, held the passover-feast, and ate their roasted lamb standing up with pilgrims' staves in their hands. If the joys of life are measured out to us in Germany with a more sparing hand, it is at least vouchsafed to us that we shall enjoy them at our most comfortable ease. Our days glide as softly as a hair drawn through milk.

My dear Lewald, this last comparison is not from me, but from a rabbi. I read it not long ago in a selection of rabbinical poetry, where the writer compared the life of the just to a hair drawn through milk. At first I was disgusted (*anfangs kotzte ich*) a little at this figure of speech, for nothing nauseates my stomach so much as when I of a morning, drinking my coffee, find a hair in the milk. And then the idea of a long hair which is softly drawn out like the life of

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the just! But that is all only an idiosyncrasy of mine. I will in future accustom myself to the simile, and use it on every occasion. An author should not yield to his subjectivity; he must be able to write any and everything, however disgusting to him it may be.[1]

The life of a German is like a hair drawn through milk. Yes, one could greatly improve the comparison by saying that the German people are like a wig of thirty million braided hairs swimming, calm of soul, in a vast milk-pot. I might keep half the simile by comparing French life to a milk-pot in which thousands upon thousands of flies have fallen, who are all climbing on one another's backs trying to escape, but who will all perish at last, except a few who, by chance or ability, manage to get to the edge, and crawl out with dabbled, clogged wings.

For peculiar reasons, I have made but few reflections over the social condition of the French. No one can tell how the great knot will be disentangled. It may be that France is drawing near a terrible catastrophe. The men who begin a revolution are generally its victims, and such a

[1] If our author found himself at first *disgusted* with a hair in milk—the whole conception is borrowed from a story of Napoleon being sickened at a similar occurrence—he should have reflected that his readers would probably be even more so, and have quietly dropped or passed over the simile without dwelling on it.—*Translator.*

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fate overtakes races as well as individuals. It is possible that the French people, which began the great revolution in Europe, may perish, while the nations coming after may reap the harvest which it sowed.

Yet I hope that I err. The French race is like a cat, which, though it may fall from the most terrible height, never breaks its neck, but always alights upon its feet.

But to admit the truth, my dear Lewald, I do not know whether it is naturally or historically true that cats always do fall on their four paws, as I heard when a small boy. Once, at that time, I wished to test it by experiment, and climbed with our cat on the roof, and threw her down into the street. But by chance a Cossack soldier was at that instant riding by, and the poor cat fell exactly on the point of his lance, and he rode away with the spitted animal—rejoicing! If it be true that cats when projected from a given height always fall uninjured on their feet, they should always in such cases beware of Cossack lances. . . .

I have said in my preceding letter that it is not owing to the political situation that comedy flourishes better in France than in Germany, for the same is the case as regards tragedy. I even dare to assert that this political situation is here detrimental to tragedy. The tragic poet must

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believe in and feel heroism, which is all impossible in a country where freedom of the press, a representative constitution, and a *bourgeoisie* flourish. For the freedom of the press, while it daily illuminates with its boldest lights the humanity of a hero, steals from his head that charitable (*wohlthätigen*) nimbus which assures him the blind adoration of the people and of the poet. I will not even mention that Republicanism in France uses the liberty of the press to crush all predominant grandeur by mockery or slander, and utterly destroy all enthusiasm for individuals. This lust for calumny is now quite extravagantly supported by the so-called representative constitutional system (*Verfassungswesen*), or that system of fictions which retards the cause of freedom instead of advancing it, and suffers no great personalities to rise, either among the people or on the throne. For this system, this mockery of a true representation of national interests, this hotch-potch of petty election intrigues, mistrusts, love of brawling, public insolence, secret corruption, and official lies, demoralises kings every whit as much as it does the people. Here monarchs must play at comedy, answer idle gossip with still idler commonplaces, smile graciously on enemies, sacrifice friends, act in all things in an underhand manner, and by eternal self-abnegation, and by belying them-

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selves, extinguish in their own breasts all the free, great-minded, and vigorous inspirations of a royal and heroic mind. For this belittling of all that is great and such a radical destruction of heroism we may thank that *bourgeoisie*, that citizen class which has risen to power here in France by the overthrow of the hereditary nobility, and made its narrow-minded, sober, shopkeeper opinions prevail in every sphere of life. Nor will it be long before all heroic thoughts and feelings will, even if they do not perish utterly, become ridiculous. I will not, by my soul! wish that the old *régime* of privileged nobility should return, for it was nothing but a varnished rottenness, a bedecked and perfumed corpse, which must have been quietly let down into a grave or violently cast into a vault, in case it was determined to continue its hopeless sham-life and revolt too violently against its interment. But the new *régime* which has supplanted the old one is even more hateful; and far more repulsive do we find this unvarnished coarseness, this life without perfume, this ever-busy moneyed chivalry, this National Guard, this weaponed fear which bears you down with the intelligent bayonet[1] when you dare assert that the

[1] Here again we find in another form the famous phrase of Kossuth that "bayonets think." This passage ends as follows

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world should be led not by petty talent for arithmetic, or by a highly remunerated talent for calculation, but by genius, beauty, love, and strength.

The men of thought, who so unweariedly prepared the Revolution in the eighteenth century, would blush if they could see how selfishness now builds its wretched huts where palaces once stood, and how from these huts a new aristocracy is working itself out by usury, an aristocracy more disagreeable than the older, and which does not even attempt to justify itself by an idea, or by ideal faith in hereditary (*fortgezeugte*) virtue, but which finds its basis only in the inherited possession of money, which is commonly the result of mere petty perseverance, if not of the dirtiest vices.

And yet, when we closely examine this aristocracy, we find that it has certain analogies with the older aristocracy, especially with the latter, as it showed itself shortly before its death. The privilege of birth based itself then on papers which proved not the excellence of ancestors but their number. It was a kind of birth paper-money which gave to the nobles under

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in the French version: "Cette peur armée qui vous frappe avec la baïonette intelligente quand vous asez soutenir que le gouvernement du monde n'appartient qu'au génie, à la beauté, à l'amour et à la force."—*Translator.*

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Louis XV. and Louis XVI. their legal value, and classified them in different grades of consideration, just as the commercial paper of to-day assigns to commercial men (*Industriellen*) their social value and their rank. Here the Bourse assumes the assignment of dignities and the allotment of rank to which the paper entitles men, showing in this the same conscientiousness as did the sworn heralds in the last century, when they investigated the diplomas with which the nobility verified their pretensions to pre-eminence.[1] These moneyed aristocrats, though they form a hierarchy in which every one thinks himself better than another, have, however, a certain *esprit de corps*, they hold in an emergency solidly together, make sacrifices when the honour of the corporation is at stake, and, as I learn, establish societies to support their colleagues who are in adversity.

I am bitter to-day, my dear friend, and do not do justice to that spirit of benevolence which the new aristocracy displays far more than did the old. I say *displays* (*an den Tag giebt*), for this benevolence does not shun the light, and shows itself gladly in clear sunlight. This benevolence or charity is among the present moneyed aristocracy just what condescension was with the

[1] Here this letter ends in the French version.

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former hereditary nobility, a praiseworthy virtue, the practice of which, however, wounded our feelings and often struck us as refined insolence. Oh, I hate the benevolence of the millionaire far more than the meanness of the miser who keeps his money in anxiety and care under lock and key. He at least insults us less than the benefactor who gained his wealth by trading on our wants and necessities, and, while openly displaying it, throws back to us a few farthings for alms.[1]

[1] The most admirable point in this letter is the analysis of that sentimentalism which prevails when men have the least depth of feeling, or when they are most under the influence of materialism. The illustrations may be found in Bernardin de St. Pierre, Chateaubriand, and Lamartine.

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FIFTH LETTER.

My neighbour, the old grenadier, sits to-day musing before his street-door. From time to time he begins one of his old songs of Bonaparte, but his voice fails him from deep emotion; his eyes are red, and from all appearance the old boy has been weeping.

For he was last night at Franconi's Theatre, where he saw the "Battle of Austerlitz." He left Paris at midnight, and the memory of what he had seen moved his soul so mightily that he marched about all night in his sleep like a somnambulist, and was amazed to find himself on awaking this morning here in the village. He explained one by one to me the defects of the piece as it was played, for he himself had been at Austerlitz, where the weather was so cold that his gun froze fast to his fingers, while at Franconi's he could hardly bear the heat. He was very much pleased with the gunpowder smoke, and also the smell of the horses, *qui était bien rendue*, which was as natural as life, but remarked that in the cavalry at Austerlitz the

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horses were not so well trained. He could not really say whether the manœuvres of the infantry were correctly given or not, because at Austerlitz, as in every battle, the smoke was so thick that one could hardly see what was going on round him. But the gunpowder smoke at Franconi's, as the old soldier said, was of the very best quality, and agreed so well with his lungs, that he was cured then and there of his cough.

"And the Emperor?" I asked.

"The Emperor," replied the veteran, "was just the same as when in body and life, in his grey overcoat and three-cornered hat, so that it made my heart beat."

"Hélas! l'Empereur!" he added. "God knows how much I loved him! I have been often enough through fire for him in this life, and even after my death I must go through fire again."

Ricou—so the old soldier was named—uttered these last words in a gloomy and mysterious tone, and I recalled that I had already more than once heard him say that he had damned himself for the Emperor. And when I begged him seriously to-day to explain these enigmatic words, he related to me the following terrible tale.

When Napoleon I. carried away Pope Pius VI. as prisoner from Rome, and brought him to

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the lofty mountain-castle of Savona, Ricou was one of a company of grenadiers who guarded him. At first much freedom was allowed to the Holy Father; he could without hindrance leave his rooms when he pleased, and go to the castle chapel, where he read mass every day. And when he passed through the great hall where the Imperial grenadiers kept watch, he stretched out his hands to them and gave them his blessing. But one morning the grenadiers received the *consigne expresse*, or express orders to guard much more strictly the entrance to the Papal apartments, and to prevent the Pope from passing through the hall. Unfortunately, fate so willed it that the execution of this order fell on Ricou—he, a born Breton, therefore an arch-Catholic, and one who worshipped in the prisoner the true vicar of Jesus Christ.

Poor Ricou stood as sentinel before the apartments of the Pope, when the latter, as usual, wished to cross the great hall in order to go and read mass in the chapel. But Ricou stepped promptly before him, and declared that he had the *consigne* not to permit the Holy Father to pass. In vain did several priests who accompanied the Pope strive to move the soldier's heart, and make him feel what madness, what a sin, what deep damnation he drew on his soul by preventing or hindering His Holiness from reading mass.

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But Ricou was immovable; he steadily fell back on the impossibility of disobedience to orders, and when the Pope, regardless of him, would still go on, he cried resolutely, "Au nom de l'Empereur!" and pressed him back with his bayonet. After a few days the strict regulation was relaxed, and the Pope could go to the chapel, as before, to read mass; and he again gave his benediction to all the soldiers except to poor Ricou, at whom he always looked severely (*mit strengem Strafblicke ansah*), and on whom he turned his back while he spread out his hands in blessing the other guards.

"And yet I could not act otherwise; I had my *consigne;* I must obey the Emperor," added the old invalid as he told me the terrible tale, "and if he had commanded it—God forgive me!—I would have run my bayonet into the belly of the Eternal Father Himself." [1]

I assured the poor man that the Emperor alone was responsible for all the sins of all the Grande Armeé, which would cause him little trouble, since no devil in hell would dare to tackle him (*anzutasten*). The veteran was much

[1] The French version, with graceful duplicity, makes this *Père éternel*, which may pass for the Pope, but Heine has it, "Hätte ich dem lieben Gott selber das Baionett durch den Leibe gerannt."

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pleased at this, and related, as he often did, with fluent inspiration, the time when all was rippling and running with gold—*où tout ruisselait d'or*—and so flourishing, while to-day the whole world seems to be so faded and colourless.

Was this Imperial epoch in France really so beautiful and inspired with happiness as these Bonapartists, small and great, from the invalid soldier Ricou to the Duchess of Abrantes, would have us believe? I doubt it. The fields lay waste, and men were marched away to be slaughtered. There were everywhere weeping mothers and desolate homes. But it is with these Bonapartists as it was with the drunken beggar, who made the shrewd observation that so long as he was sober, his dwelling was only a wretched hut, his wife in rags, and his child sick and hungry; but when he had swallowed a few glasses of brandy, all this misery was changed, his hut became a palace, his wife a gloriously arrayed princess, and his child smiled like cheerful health itself. And when he was reproved for his bad conduct and management, he insisted that if he could only be supplied with brandy enough, all his household affairs would soon assume a more brilliant aspect. Instead of brandy, the Bonapartists were so much intoxicated with fame, ambition, and the lust of conquest that they never realised the true state of affairs during the

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Empire, and now, on every occasion, when there is a complaint of hard times, they cry, "All that will be changed, and France will flourish and be glorious if you only will give us to drink once more crosses of honour, epaulettes, *contributions volontaires*, Spanish pictures, and duchies *à pleins bords*, in full draughts."

However it may be, it is not only the old Bonapartists, but even the great majority of the people, who fondly cradle themselves in these delusions, and the days of the Empire are their poetry, a poetry which still forms an opposition to the petty prosaic spirit of the victorious *bourgeoisie*. The heroism of the Imperial *régime* is the only thing to which the French are still susceptible, and Napoleon the only hero in whom they believe.

When you duly reflect on this, dear friend, you will comprehend its importance and value (*Geltung*) to the French theatre, and the advantageous results which the dramatic authors draw from this only source of inspiration in the sandy deserts of indifferentism. When in the small vaudevilles of the theatres of the Boulevards there is given a scene from the days of the Empire, or the Emperor himself in person appears, let the piece be bad, nay, detestable, there will be applause, for the heart and soul of the auditors is in and with the acting, and they applaud their

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own feelings and remembrances. There are couplets in which there are stinging retorts which are as blows of a club on the brain of a Frenchman, and others which are as onions to his eyes. All hurrah, weep, and flame at the words *aigle français, soleil d'Austerlitz, Jena, les Pyramides, la grande armée, l'honneur, la vielle garde, Napoléon* —but when the man himself, *l'homme*, appears at the end of the piece as *deus ex machinâ*, then the enthusiasm is at its height. He always has the magic hat (*Wünschelhütchen*) on his head and his hands behind his back, and speaks as laconically as possible, but never sings. I have never seen a vaudeville in which Napoleon sung. All the others sing. I have even heard old Fritz, Frederick the Great, sing in certain vaudevilles —sing such bad poetry that one might think it was his own.

In fact, the verses of these vaudevilles are cruelly bad (*Spottschlecht*), but the music is good, especially in the pieces where the old veterans, or *vieux grognards*, sing the martial greatness and the mournful end of the Emperor. The graceful lightness of the vaudeville then turns to an elegiac, sentimental tone, which might move even a German. The detestable words of these *complaintes* are adapted to the well-known melodies of popular Napoleonic songs. These latter are heard here everywhere; one might believe that

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they flew in the air or that the birds sung them on the sprays of trees. I am always recalling these elegiac, sentimental melodies, as I have heard them sung by young girls, small children, crippled soldiers, with all kinds of accompaniments and variations. They were most touchingly sung by a blind invalid of the citadel of Dieppe. My dwelling was at the foot of that citadel where it juts out into the sea, and *there* the veteran sat all night long singing the great deeds of Napoleon. The ocean seemed to listen to his song; the word *gloire* flew proudly o'er the waves, which, rising, seemed to utter wild applause, and then go rolling on their nightly way. Perhaps arriving at St. Helena, they greet with reverence the tragic rocks, or broke in rage and agony upon them. How many a night I stood by the window and listened to that old invalid soldier of Dieppe! I can never forget him; I see him always sitting on the old wall, while the moon looks out of the dark clouds and sadly casts its light on him, the Ossian of the Empire.

It is impossible to estimate the importance of Napoleon for the French stage of the future. Hitherto he has been seen only in vaudevilles or great melodramas of noise and display—*à decorations et à fracas*—but it is the goddess of Tragedy who will finally reclaim this great character as

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her own by right. Does it not seem as if that Fortune who so strangely directed his life had reserved him as a special gift for her cousin Melpomene? The tragic bards of every age will exalt and glorify the fate of this man in verse and prose, but it is to the French poets that this hero is especially assigned, because the French people have broken with all their past, and only feel, as regards the great representatives of the feudal and courtesan age of the Valois and Bourbons, no sympathy whatever, or perhaps a bitter hatred. Therefore, Napoleon, the son of the Revolution, the only great conquering form, is the only royal hero to whom Young France can devote its whole heart.

I have here incidentally, and from another side, indicated that the political situation of France is not favourable to tragedy. For when they take historical subjects from the Middle Ages or from the time of the last Bourbons, they cannot guard themselves against the influence of a certain party spirit, and the poet beforehand, and all unconsciously, forms a modern Liberal Opposition to the old king or knight whom he would celebrate. Hence ensue discords which grate most unpleasantly on the feelings of a German, who has never actually broken off relations with the past, and especially a German poet who has been trained to the impartiality of

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Goethe's artistic manner. The last note of the *Marseillaise* must die away for the last time before author and public can suitably agree as to the heroes of their earlier history. And even if the soul of the author were perfectly purified from all the dross of hate, his words would not meet a single impartial ear in the *parterre*, where the men sit who can never forget the bloody conflicts in which they met the kinsmen of those heroes who are being dramatised before them. There is little pleasure in beholding the parent when we have beheaded the son in the Place de Grève. Such things interfere with our enjoying the theatre. And sometimes the impartiality of the poet is so much distrusted that anti-revolutionary opinions are attributed to him. Then the enraged Republicans cry, "What is the meaning of all this chivalry — this fantastic rubbish?"—and then roar anathema at the poet who exalts the heroes of the olden time, to the leading astray of the people, and to the awaking aristocratic sympathies with his verses.

Here, as in many other things, there is manifested an affinity and similarity (*wahlverwandtschaftliche Aehnlichkeit*) between the French Republicans and the English Puritans. The same tone growls and grumbles through all their controversies as to the theatre, with only this difference, that the latter draw the most absurd

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arguments from religious, and the former from political, fanaticism. Among the documents of Cromwell's time there is a controversial work by the celebrated Puritan Prynne entitled *Histrio-mastix* (The Player's Scourge), printed in 1633, from which I extract the following for your amusement:—

"There is scarce one devil in hell, hardly a notorious sin or sinner upon earth, either of ancient or modern times, but hath some part or other in our stage-plays.

"Oh, that our players, our play-hunters, would now seriously consider that the persons whose parts, whose sins they act and see, are even then yelling in the eternal flames of hell for these particular sins of theyrs, even then whilst they are playing of these sins, these parts of theyrs on the stage! Oh, that they would now remember the sighs, the groans, the tears, the anguish, weeping and gnashing of teeth, the crys and shrieks that these wickednesses cause in hell, whilest they are acting, applauding, committing, and laughing at them in the playhouse!"

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SIXTH LETTER.

My dear, deeply beloved friend! I feel this morning as if I wore a garland of poppies, which cause all my senses and thoughts to sleep. Sulky and sour, I often shake my head, and then perhaps here and there a few sleeping thoughts awake, but immediately after begin to nod, and in an instant are all snoring together, *à l'envi*, as if for a bet. And the sallies of wit, the snaps of fun, those fleas of the brain who jump about among the sleeping thoughts, do not seem to be particularly lively, and are rather sentimental and dreamy. Is it the air of spring which causes such stupefaction, or the change in my manner of life? Here I go to bed of evenings at nine o'clock without being weary, and then do not enjoy a sound sleep which holds every limb, but roll about all night in a dream-seeking half-slumber.[1] In Paris, on the contrary, where I

[1] *Traumsüchtig Halbschlummer.* A very accurate description of the wakeful man trying to create fancies or *make* dreams which will perhaps lead to sleep. The French version gives this, as it does almost all very German phrases, very carelessly,

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did not retire for several hours past midnight, my sleep was like iron. I left the dinner-table at eight o'clock, and then we rolled in a carriage to the theatre. Our third companion, Dr. Det-

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i.e., as "dans une sorte d'hallucination somnolente." This is not at all because the French language is not sufficiently supple or plastic or subtle; the real reason is that the French, like the Chinese, or like many English purists, are so tenacious of old forms, not only of language, but of thought, that they oppose everything which is not absolutely and easily familiar to them. There are in the French language elements of strength, combination, and flexibility not inferior perhaps to those of English or German, as may be seen by the works of Rabelais and the Norman Trouveurs and chroniclers. But the "cultivated" lack the determined courage to develop their language as *men* should, and criticism, unfortunately, in France as in England, limits its work, like Mr. Turveydrop, to "polish-polish," and to outlawing all who are not "in good form." I have just finished reading a book (in English) on errors in language, which, were all its laws and precepts to be carried out by all writers, would have the result of killing all style whatever, and of reducing it to that of the author, which is one of the dreariest leaden-grey conceivable. These people do not comprehend that if the English language has the noblest literature in Europe, it is because our tongue has been the freest of any in the world from those laws, regulations, and paltry petty traditions with which they would fain encumber it. I am told that there is no language in which grand and vigorous poetry is not only so deficient, but so impossible as Chinese, the reason being that the schoolmasters, critics, purists, professors, and other forms of the *arbiter elegantiarum* have for two thousand years so completely influenced words and their uses or misuses in the Celestial Kingdom that there is now no conceivable manner of expressing any Chinese thought which is not formalised and known to every "topside, numpa one, litee-man" (or truly cultivated man of

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mold of Hanover, who passed last winter in Paris, always accompanied us, and kept us awake and merry, however soporific the piece may have been. Much have we laughed, drunk, and criticised together. Be of good cheer, good friend; *you* were never spoken of save with warmest praise.

You are astonished that I went so often to the theatre, knowing that it is not one of my habits. Out of caprice I abstained this winter from society (*Salonlebens*), and in order that my friends, whom I seldom visited, should not see me in the theatre, I usually chose a proscenium-box or *avant scène*, in the corner of which one can best conceal himself from view; and besides, these are my favourite seats. From them one can see not only what is being played, but also what is going on behind the scenes, where art ceases and nature again begins. When a pathetic scene is being acted on the stage, and at the same time bits of free and easy actor's life are now and then caught, it reminds us of pictures on the walls, or of the frescoes in the Glyptothek of Munich or in many Italian *palazzi*, where, in the vacant corners of

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letters), and this form *must* be displayed. They have not only got the giant genius of language fastened down by pins, as the Lilliputians confined Gulliver, but bid fair to keep him down for ever.—*Translator.*

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great historical pictures, are only grotesque arabesques, merry frolicking of gods, and idylls of bacchanals and satyrs.

I went seldom to the Théâtre Français; there is something in it desolate and dull. It seems to be still haunted by the ghosts of the old tragedy with dagger and poisoned cups in their pale hands, and the place is dusty with the powder of the old classic perukes. But what is most intolerable is that on this classic ground the innovation of modern Romanticism with its wild fancies is often permitted, or that, as if it were to meet the requirements of the older and the younger public, we meet with a mixture of the Classic and Romantic.[1] These French dramatic poets are emancipated slaves, who always drag after them a fragment of the old Classic chain. A delicate ear hears at every step a rattling as if in the time of the Empire of Agamemnon and of Talma.

I am far from being inclined to entirely reject unconditionally the old French tragedy. I honour Corneille, and I love Racine. They have given us masterpieces which should remain for ever on pedestals in the temple of art. But their day for being acted has long gone by; they accomplished their mission before a public of noble

[1] French version—"Espèce de tragique juste milieu."

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spectators, who loved to consider themselves as the inheritors of ancient heroism, or who, at least, did not reject their heroism in a petty *bourgeois* spirit. Even under the Empire the heroes of Corneille and of Racine could expect the greatest sympathy when they played before the box of the great Emperor and a pit full of kings. Those times are past; the old aristocracy is dead; the throne is now nothing but a common wooden chair covered with red velvet, and to-day the heroes of Paul de Kock and of Eugène Scribe reign in their place.[1]

A mixed style and an anomaly of taste, such as now prevails in the Théâtre Français, is not agreeable. The innovators mostly incline to a naturalism which is as objectionable in high tragedy as the puffed-out windy imitation of Classic pathos. You know only too well, dear Lewald, the "natural system" of Ifflandism which once raged in Germany, and which was put down by the influence of Schiller and Goethe.[2] Such a system of naturalism is endeavouring to establish itself here, and its followers fight against metrical form and measured delivery. If the first consisted only of Alexandrines and the latter of

[1] Eugène Scribe is omitted in the French version.

[2] French version—"Et que vainquit la phalange de Weimar commandée par Schiller et Goethe."

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the quavering guttural tone (*Zittergegröhle*)[1] of the old school, these people would be in the right, and plain prose and the most commonplace tones of ordinary life of course far preferable for the scene; but then true tragedy must perforce perish because it requires measured language, and a very different style of declamation to that of society. I would almost require this for all dramatic productions. The stage certainly is never a commonplace reproduction of life, and it should show this in a certain dignified ennobling (of it), manifesting itself, if not in the measure of words and of delivery, at least in the fundamental tone (*Grundton*), in the deeply felt solemnity of a piece.[2] For the theatre is another world, apart from our own, as the stage is from the pit. Between the theatre and reality lie the orchestra, the music, and the dividing line of footlights on the front. Reality, after having crossed the realm of music and the impressive row of lights, stands before us on the stage transfigured and revealed as poetry. The charming euphony of the music rings from her

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[1] French version—*Le froufrou monotone.*

[2] *Feierlichkeit*, though defined as "solemnity," does not convey the idea of seriousness allied to melancholy, but that which is peculiar to celebrations and dignified ceremonies. It rather implies, on the contrary, an exalted sense of joyousness in festivity.

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in dying echoes, and she is illumed as in a fairy vision by the mysterious lamps. It is all a magic sound and a magic gleam, which readily seem to a prosaic public to be unnatural, and yet are far more natural than ordinary nature, for it is nature elevated by art to its fairest divinity.

The best tragic poets in France are still at present Alexandre Dumas and Victor Hugo. I put the latter in the second place, because his efficiency as regards the theatre is not so great or productive of result,[1] although he surpasses all his contemporaries on this side of the Rhine in poetical power. I will not deny him dramatic talent, as many who perfidiously continually praise his lyrical greatness. He is a poet, and commands poetry in every form. His dramas are as admirable as his odes. But in the theatre the rhetorical is more effective than the poetic, and the reproaches which the poet endured on the failure of a play were more deserved by the public, which is less susceptible to naïve natural expression, deeply significant forms and characters and psychologic refinements, than it is to pompous phrases, broad bleatings, or roars of passion and

[1] The conclusion of this sentence, and the beginning of the next to the words "The Carlists regard him as," are omitted in the French version.

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gags (*Koulissenreisserei*). This last is called in French *brûler les planches.*

Victor Hugo is actually not as yet esteemed here in France at his full value. German critics and German impartiality mete out his merits with a better measure, and honour him with higher praise. This want of recognition is due not only to contemptibly petty criticism, but to political partisan feeling. The Carlists regard him as a renegade, who, while his lyre still rang with the lost chords of a song of consecration (*Salbungslied*) for Charles X., tuned it to a hymn on the Revolution of July. The Republicans mistrust his zeal for the popular cause, and spy out in every phrase a secret predilection for nobility and Catholicism. Even the Invisible Church of the St. Simonians,[1] which is everywhere and nowhere, like the Christian Church before Constantine, disowns him; for these men regard art as a priesthood, and require that every work of the poet, the painter, the sculptor, or musician shall in itself bear witness to its higher consecration and set forth its holy mission, which is the making happy[2] and beautiful of the

[1] This appears to have been suggested by *Die Unsichtbare Loge*, the Invisible Lodge, by Jean Paul Richter.

[2] *Beglücken.* Very well translated in American by "to happify." The French version here translates *irrigen* in the following sentence as "*absurdes*," which is very far from what

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human race. The works of Victor Hugo indicate no such moral standard, and they sin against all the noble but erroneous laws of the new church. I call them erroneous, because, as you know, I am for the autonomy of art, which should be the handmaid of neither religion nor politics, for it is in itself its own aim, like the world itself. Here we encounter the same narrow-minded or one-sided reproaches which Goethe had to endure from the pious brethren, and, like him, so must Victor Hugo bear the unjust accusation that he has no enthusiasm for the ideal, that he is without moral basis, is a cold-hearted egoist, and so forth. And add to this a false criticism, which declares that the best which there is to praise in him, his talent for sensuous or material form and creation (*sinnlichen Gestaltung*), is a fault, and adds that in these creations there is a want of deep poetry, *la poesie intime;* outline and colour are everything to him; he gives us only superficial (*äusserlich fassbare*) poetry; he is material; in

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the author would convey in the German. Nothing which is really noble can be quite absurd or contrary to reason. I may here remark that one of the most absurd misuses of "absurd" is the vulgar application of it to anything which is witty, humorous, or droll. "Ridiculous" is also perverted in the same manner. A good jest is neither absurd nor ridiculous if it amuses us. This misuse is a relic of the old Puritanical affectation of seriousness, which regards all mirth, laughter, and even whistling, as "vara preposterous."—*Translator.*

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short, they blame in him his most praiseworthy, peculiar talent, his sense for the plastic.[1]

And such injustice is not done him by the old Classicals, who only attacked him with Aristotelian weapons, and who have long been conquered, but by his former companions in arms, a

[1] Which is, however, quite true, Heine being very much inclined to confuse moral principles drawn from high human ideals with those of mere objective *art*. Next after Edgar A. Poe, Victor Hugo is the most *atheistic* poet in verse or prose with whom I am acquainted—that is to say, the most remote from any *principle* save that of "art for the sake of art," to those to whom *skill alone* is everything. Victor Hugo is regarded by Swinburne as the greatest genius of our age; that he is the great French genius, no one will deny. There is nowhere in his works one warm and genial spark of life, but abundance of galvanism and electricity, enough to make dead mammoths dance and cover the heavens with northern lights. Edgar A. Poe, however, never so much as suspected or conceived of the existence of a higher principle or ideal of anything in any human being, while Victor Hugo had just enough knowledge of what he supposed men had imagined about such things to use them in constructing and planning. Poe dwelt in a burnt-out world of grey ashes and scoriæ, in constant dim twilight; Victor Hugo, in a similar planet, but one not quite devoid of at least mosses, lichens, and petrified trees, nor wanting occasional gleams of lightning, or star- and moon-light. To judge from his conversation rather than from his works, I should say that Walt Whitman really belonged to this school, and perhaps by nature Swinburne, although the latter often tears himself away from it with great energy, as if it were below him. Heine, who had a full perception of both schools, subjective and objective, belongs to both, and praises or abuses either according to the vein which he may be in. Fifteen lines of the German original are here omitted from the French version.—*Translator.*

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fraction of the Romantic school which has quarrelled utterly with its literary standard-bearer. Almost all of his earlier friends have fallen away from him; and, to tell the truth, fallen away by his own fault, wounded by that egoism which is very advantageous as regards creating masterpieces, but very detrimental to social intercourse. Even Sainte-Beuve could at last endure him no longer—Sainte-Beuve, he who was once the trustiest squire of his renown. As in Africa, when the king of Darfour rides forth, he is preceded by a panegyrist, who cries continually in tremendous tones, "Behold the Buffalo, the descendant of a buffalo, the Bull of bulls; all others are oxen—this is the only real Buffalo!" —even so Sainte-Beuve always ran before Victor Hugo when the latter came before the public in a book, and, blowing a trumpet, loudly praised the Great Buffalo of Poetry. That time of praise has now quite passed away; Sainte-Beuve now only exalts the common calves or eminent cows of French literature;[1] the once friendly voices are now no longer heard, or heard in blame, and the greatest poet in France can never more receive

[1] "Les vaches distinguées de la littérature française." In allusion, of course, to the lady-writers. The rest of this paragraph and the whole of the one following are omitted from the French version.—*Translator.*

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in his own home (*Heimath*), or where he dwells, the recognition which is his due.

Yes, Victor Hugo is the first poet in France, and, which is a great deal to say, he might even take place in Germany among our own first-class poets. He has fantasy, wild imagination, and genial feeling, and with it a want of tact such as is never found in Frenchmen, but only among us Germans. His soul wants harmony, and he abounds in exuberances of bad taste, as do Grabbe and Jean Paul. The beautiful rhythmic measure which we admire in classic authors is wanting in him. His Muse, despite her magnificence, displays a certain German awkwardness—I might say of her what we say of beautiful English girls, "They have two left hands."[1]

[1] It is a great pity that this admirably accurate estimate of Victor Hugo's genius should end with such a remark as to English ladies. But it is true that in the Thirties, and even in the Forties, a far greater proportion of English women than at present were noted for a peculiar *gaucherie* of manner and dowdiness in dress, which was too universal and marked to be honestly denied. *Nous avons changé tout cela*, or at least the ladies have changed it themselves; for at Homburg-les-Bains, where I am now writing (August 1892), one has but to step to the tennis-ground—a furlong from the door—to see among a hundred English maids and matrons as much grace, litheness, and beauty, and above all that nameless air which constitutes the *distinguée*, as could be found among an equal number of women anywhere in the world. It is also very remarkable that English girls, as they have grown graceful, have greatly increased in height.—*Translator.*

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Alexandre Dumas is not so great a poet as Victor Hugo, *tant s'en faut*, but he has qualities which go much further as regards the theatre. He has at command that prompt, straightforward expression of passion which the French call *verve*, and therewith he is more French than Hugo. He sympathises with all virtues and vices, daily needs and restless fancies, of his fellow-countrymen; he is by turns enthusiastic, riotous, comedian-like, noble, frivolous, swaggering, a real son of France, that Gascony of Europe. He speaks to heart with heart, and is understood and applauded. His head is a public-house, where many good thoughts stay, which often remain only for a night; it very often happens too that the house is empty. No one has such a talent for the dramatic as Dumas. The theatre is his true calling; he is a born stage-poet, and all materials for the drama belong to him, whether he finds them in Nature or in Schiller, Shakespeare or Calderon. He gets from them new effects, and melts down old coins to utter them anew for more agreeable currency; and we should even thank him for his thefts from the past, since he therewith enriches the future. A very unjust criticism, an article which appeared long ago, under most deplorable circumstances, in the *Journal des Débats*, greatly injured our poor poet among the ignorant multitude. In it was shown

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that many scenes in his plays had the most striking resemblance to others in foreign dramas. But there is nothing so foolish as this reproach of plagiarism; there is in art no sixth commandment;[1] the poet may grasp and grab (*zugreifen*) boldly wherever he finds material for his works; he may even appropriate whole columns,[2] carved capitals and all, so that the temple which they support be magnificent. Goethe understood this very well, as did Shakespeare long before him. There is nothing more absurd than the demand

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[1] Nor any other commandment, according to the æsthete, "art for the sake of art," anything for effect school. Heine's advice to steal boldly, and vindicate yourself by the doctrine that the end justifies the means, is, however, far nobler than that which now prevails in Anglo-Saxony, and which has recently been amusingly illustrated by an instance of an author who, when very remarkable "parallels" were established, pled total ignorance of the original. For as the most magnificently soaring birds, and those capable of the most sustained flights, find it the most difficult to start from the ground (as I have often seen), so the greatest geniuses, by some strange law, seem to be almost incapable of inventing works *ab ovo*, or from the egg, and, to continue the ornithological simile, must always put their eggs, when they do at last lay them, like the cuckoo, in some other nest. The trouble lies in this, that the public firmly believe that nine-tenths of the merit of a book consists merely in this originality of subject, whereas, in truth, nineteen-twentieths of genius are to be found in the treatment of the theme.—*Translator.*

[2] As Dumas did; but this very fair pun is not in the original, neither do I make it, *spalte* being a printed column in German. It is unavoidable. But Shakespeare and Dumas!—*Translator.*

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that a poet shall create all his subject-matter from himself, and that that constitutes originality. I remember a fable[1] in which the spider reproached the bee that she collected from a thousand flowers the material with which she made wax and honey, "while I," she triumphantly added, "spin all my artistic webs in original lines from myself."

As I said, the article against Dumas in the *Journal des Débats* appeared under very deplorable circumstances. It was written by one of those young *Seiden*, or devoted attendants, who blindly obeyed the orders of Victor Hugo, and was printed in a newspaper whose directors were most intimate with the latter. Hugo was magnanimous enough not to deny his knowledge of the affair, and he believed—as is usual and customary in literary friendships—to have given his old friend Dumas the proper death-blow at a fitting time.[2]

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[1] To which should be added "of my own manufacture," since in the first edition this is given as follows: "I remember that among my last papers there was a fable in which I made the spider talk with the bee, and the spider reproached the bee," &c. This passage gave a hint to an American named Fetteridge, who, having invented a soap made of honey, ingeniously called it "the balm of a thousand flowers." Heine had advised the stealing of ideas, and Fetteridge took the advice.—*Translator.*

[2] One cannot very clearly make out from the original here

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In fact, a veil of black crape has ever since hung over the fame of Dumas, and many assert that should that veil be withdrawn nothing would be found behind it. But since the introduction of such a drama as "Edmund Kean" to the public, the reputation of Dumas has again come forth in brilliancy from its dark concealment, and he has again made known his great dramatic talent.

This piece, which has certainly been appropriated by the German stage,[1] is conceived and executed with a truth to life (*Lebendigkeit*) and vividness such as I have never seen; there is a gush, a novelty in the means employed, which present themselves, as it were, a tale (*Fabel*) the involutions of which spring naturally one from the other, a feeling which comes from and speaks to the heart—in short, a creation. Although Dumas may have committed some trifling errors of costume and locality, there prevails nevertheless in the whole picture a startling truthfulness

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whether Heine means that it is usual in all literary friendships to believe that one has given a death-blow to Alexandre Dumas, or to one's own friends. In my own opinion, just at the instant when this was written, the heart of our author was in as bad a condition as his grammar. This beautiful passage is wanting in the French version.—*Translator.*

[1] "Cette pièce qui est certainement faite pour réussir également sur la scène allemande." This certainly would seem to indicate that the French version was here the original text.

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which bore me again in spirit to Old England, and Kean himself, whom I there so often saw, seemed to be living again before my eyes. The actor who played the part of Kean naturally contributed, although his exterior, which was the imposing form of Frédéric Lemaître, was so very different from the small stout figure of Kean. Yet there was something in his personality, as well as in his playing, which I find again in Frédéric Lemaître, for there is between them a marvellous affinity. Kean was one of those exceptional natures who, by certain sudden movements, mysterious tones of voice, and still more incomprehensible glances, render apparent not so much everyday prosaic feelings, but all which there is in human nature of the unusual, bizarre, and marvellous. This is the same with Frédéric Lemaître, and the latter is also one of those terrible *farceurs* at whose sight Thalia grows pale with fright and Melpomene laughs for joy. Kean was one of those men whose character defies all the rubbing or polish of civilisation, and who are, I will not say of better stuff than the rest of us, but of an entirely different kind, angular originals with a single gift on one side, but in this one-sided faculty surpassing to an extraordinary degree all surrounding them, fully inspired with that illimitable, unfathomable, unconscious, diabolically divine power which we call

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das Dämonische—the *dæmonic*.[1] This dæmonic (force) is found more or less in all men great by word or deed. Kean was by no means a universal actor, for though he could play in many parts, it was always himself whom he played. But in so doing he gave us a tremendous truthfulness; and though ten years have passed since I saw him, I still behold him before me as Shylock, Othello, Richard, or Macbeth. The full meaning of many a passage which had been dark to me was made clear by his acting. There were modulations in his voice which revealed a whole life of horror; there were in his eyes lights which illuminated within all the darkness of a Titanic soul, sudden actions in the movement of a hand, a foot, or the head which told more than a comment in four volumes by Franz Horn.[2]

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[1] Not exactly "*we*," but rather Goethe, from whom Heine here helps himself freely, albeit he adds to and varies somewhat the great poet's comment on the young Duke of Weimar.

[2] Heine in this paper describes with marvellous and vivid truthfulness Frédéric Lemaître as a terrible jester, in whose comic acting there was always perceptible a mysterious power of latent greatness, which moved us even when not manifested. I was deeply impressed with this when I saw Lemaître in a play which called for this dual display of mental forces to a far greater degree than "Kean." This was the part of Robert Macaire, immediately after the overthrow of Louis Philippe. Robert Macaire, the popular type of a villain of the deepest dye, who plays many parts in life, is withal always dryly comic; and, to complicate the character, it had been long identified with

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that of Louis Philippe in a long series of caricatures by Gavarni. What Lemaître had to do was to give the comic villain, yet manifest in him throughout a something kingly and unconsciously refined. This very difficult task he performed to perfection, so that it seemed like a king of genius acting the scoundrel.

As regards Kean, I was once intimate with an actor who was not only a very able artist in his calling, but also a scholar. He had often seen Kean, and formed himself on his manner. What I learned from him in many conversations confirms me in the belief that what Heine has written on the great actor is a sketch of very great truth and insight.—*Translator.*

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SEVENTH LETTER.

I HAVE not, as you know, dear Lewald, the habit of discussing with easy loquacity the playing of comic actors, or, as it is called by the elegantly cultured, their artistic manifestations; but Edmund Kean, whom I mentioned in a former letter, and to whom I return, was no ordinary hero of the stage; and I confess that during my last journey to England I did not disdain to include in my journal, after a criticism of the most important Parliamentary orators of the day and of the world, my fugitive observations on Kean's acting. Unfortunately this book was lost with many more of my best papers. But I think I can remember reading to you in Wandsbeck something of Kean's rendering of Shylock from it. The Jew of Venice was the first heroic part which I saw him play. I say heroic part, for he did not play it like a broken-down old man, a kind of *Schewa* of hatred, as our Devrient does, but like a real hero. So he appears to me in memory, dressed in his black silk roquelaure, which is

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without sleeves and only reaches to the knee,[1] so that the blood-red under-garment which falls to the feet seems more startling by contrast. A black broad-rimmed felt hat rolled up on both sides, its high conical crown wound round with a crimson ribbon, covered his head, the hair of which, like that of his beard, hung down long and black as pitch, forming as it were a wild disordered frame to the healthy red face from which two white rolling eyeballs glare out as if in ambush, inspiring uncanny dread.[2] He holds in his right hand a staff, which is rather a weapon than a support. He only leans the elbow of his left arm

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[1] Shylock himself describes this garment as a gabardine. The *roquelaure* is properly a long overcoat for travelling, if I am not mistaken, with sleeves, and very much like a very loose ulster. Sculptures of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, both in England and on the Continent, represent Jews as wearing a rather broad-rimmed felt hat, the top or edge of the crown being somewhat rounded outwards, after a fashion still common in the East. They are anything but *conical*, nor are there any ribbons on them.—*Translator.*

[2] "Worin zwei weisse lechzende Augäpfel schauerlich beängstigend hervorlauern." If that which qualifies the noun *can* be overdone by excess, our author far too frequently overdoes it. The full spirit of this description is to be found in an American sketch, which states that the face and eyes of a certain man looked like a panther glaring out of a pig-pen. The mention of the elbow and cane reminds me that the actor before mentioned once lent me a very curious MS. It was a collection of notes of all *minutiæ* of Kean's acting in Shylock, or of such literal details as this.—*Translator.*

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on it, and in the left hand rests in treacherous meditation his black head with still blacker thoughts, while he explains to Bassanio what is to be understood by the expression, which is to this day current, of "a good man." When he narrates the parable of the sheep of the patriarch Jacob and of Laban, he seems to find himself entangled in his own words, and breaks out suddenly with, "Ay! he was the third." [1] And while, during a long pause, he seems to reflect on what he shall say, one feels how the tale is gradually shaping itself in his head, and when he suddenly breaks out with "No, not take interest!" as if he had found the clue, it did not seem as if one listened to a rôle learned by heart, but to a speech improvised with great difficulty. And at the end he smiled like an author who is very much pleased with his own conception. He begins slowly—

"Signor Antonio, many a time and oft,"

till he comes to the word "dog," which is thrown out with more force. His anger rises from "and spit upon my Jewish gabardine" till "own." Then he approaches, upright and proudly, and

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[1] The French version gives as a new and certainly very singular version of this text, "Ay, he was the *thirst*." Perhaps the translator was thinking of Pantagruel.—*Translator.*

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says with scornful bitterness, "Well then . . ." to "ducats." But all at once, bowing low, he takes off his hat, and with servile mien continues, "Or shall I bend low" unto "monies." Yes, his very voice becomes submissive; one only seems to hear in it a slight ring of intense wrath; gay little serpents twine round his complaisant lips—only his eyes cannot restrain themselves, and continue to shoot forth their poisoned arrows, and this contrast or combat between external humility and internal vindictiveness ends at the last word, "monies," with a terrible prolonged laugh, which suddenly breaks off, while the face, convulsively contracted or compelled to servility, remains for a time motionless as a mask, and only the eye—that evil eye—glared out threatening and deadly.

But it is all in vain; the best description can give no idea of Edmund Kean. Many actors have very well imitated his declamation, his broken delivery, for the parrot can perfectly imitate to deception the scream of the eagle, the monarch of the air. But the eagle's glance, the daring fire which looks at the akin sun, Kean's eye, that magic lightning and enchanted flame, no common bird of the theatres can appropriate.[1]

[1] Heine here sails unconsciously very near to a very appropriate word. This fowl of the theatre "is a bird men call a goose when it is 'goosed,'" in theatrical parlance, or hissed.—*Translator.*

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It was only in the eye of Frédéric Lemaître, and that while he played Kean, that I discovered something which had the greatest resemblance to Kean.

It would be unjust if I, after paying such a tribute of admiration to Frédéric Lemaître, should pass by in silence the other great actor whom Paris boasts. Bocage enjoys here quite as great a reputation as the former, and his personality is, if not so remarkable, at least quite as interesting as that of his colleague. Bocage is a handsome man of *distingué* air, whose mien and manner are of the noblest. He has a metallic or sonorous voice, rich in inflection, which adapts itself as perfectly to the most terrible thunders of wrath and scorn as to the most melting tenderness of murmuring love. He always, even in the wildest outbreaks of passion, preserves the grace and dignity of art, and disdains to grasp and dash into coarse nature, like Frédéric Lemaître, who by this means attains to greater effects, but effects which do not charm us by poetic beauty. For his is a very exceptional nature and that of one who is more possessed by his dæmonic power than possessing or controlling it himself; for which reason I compared him to Kean. Bocage is not organised differently from other men, but distinguished from them by a more finely developed organisation. He is not an incongruous mixture

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of Ariel and Caliban, but a harmonious being, a beautiful tall form like a Phœbus Apollo. His eye is not so inspired with power or significance, but he can produce marvellous effects with a movement of the head, especially when he throws it backward in scorn as if defying the world. He utters cold ironic sighs which go through the soul like a steel saw.[1] He has tears in his voice, and such deep utterances of suffering or pain that one would believe that he was bleeding internally. And when he suddenly covers his eyes with his hands, we feel as though death had said, "Let it be night!" And when he again smiles—smiles with all his sweet sorcery—then it seems as if the sun were rising on his lips.

And since I have come to discussing play, I permit myself a few modest remarks as to the difference of declamation in the three kingdoms of the civilised world—England, France, and Germany.

When I first saw tragedies in England, I was struck by the gesticulation, which much resembled that of pantomime. It did not seem to me to be unnatural, but rather an exaggeration of nature;

[1] A perilous simile in French, in which *scie* means not only a saw, but a continually repeated bore, a "chestnut," a hoax, or humbug. A sigh or *scie* would indeed be a "saw" if too often repeated. "Sawing away at it" is a common popular phrase. —*Translator.*

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and it was a long time before I could accustom myself to it, and enjoy the beauty of a Shakespearean tragedy on English soil despite this caricatured delivery. Neither could I endure the screaming, the rending screaming, with which men and women utter their parts. Is it perhaps necessary that in England, where the theatres are so vast, this roaring aloud is really necessary, so that every word may everywhere be heard? And is the caricatured gesticulation of which I speak also a local necessity, because so many of the audience are at such a distance from the stage?[1] I do not know. There is perhaps in the English theatre a law of custom as regards acting, and it may be that to this we must attribute the exaggeration which astonished me, especially among actresses, whose delicate organs,

[1] Very shrewdly conjectured. Among the Romans, masks with trumpet-like mouths were used, because few voices, if any, could make themselves heard in their immense amphitheatres. But it has escaped Heine that the English language as spoken in England by the most cultivated people is extremely difficult to understand, and requires a higher pitch than other languages anywhere spoken by anybody. I have not only observed, but determined by careful experiment, the fact that a Red Indian calling to another in his native tongue makes his utterance an octave lower than a white man, and will be distinctly understood at a hundred feet, or even yards, distance when speaking in the ordinary tones of conversation, while an American or Briton roars aloud, and in fact *must* do so if he would have his meaning clearly apprehended.—*Translator.*

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as if stalking on stilts, frequently flung themselves headlong into the most repulsive discordant sounds in virgin passions which behaved like dromedaries.[1] The circumstance that the parts of women were formerly played on the English stage by men may influence the declamation of the actresses of the present day, who perhaps still scream their rôles according to old theatrical reports and traditions.

Yet, great as the faults may be with which English declamation is burdened, it is fully atoned for by the traits of deep feeling and naturalness (*Innigkeit und Naivetät*) which it occasionally manifests. These characteristics are due to the language of the country, which is really a dialect[2] possessing all the qualities of a tongue which has come directly from the people. French is more the product of society, and it wants that naturalness and depth which only a pure source of words which has sprung from

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[1] No true translation can make anything better of this appalling *mélange* of vocal organs on stilts and virgin passions which act like dromedaries. It is somewhat improved in the French version as follows :—"L'exagération . . . surtout chez les actrices dont les organes délicats, se montant à un diapason extrême, retombent sur des dissonances criardes et se démènent comme des dromedaires, pour exprimer des passions virginales." —*Translator.*

[2] By dialect we should here understand *patois*, or perhaps jargon, *i.e.*, a mixed language.—*Translator.*

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the heart of a race and has been fecundated by its heart's blood can retain. On the other hand, French declamation has a grace and fluency which is foreign to, and even impossible in, English. Speech has been so purely filtered here in France through the gossiping life of three hundred years that it has lost every vulgar idiom and obscure turn of expression (*Wendungen*), all that is muddled and mean, but with it also and irrecoverably all perfume, all of that wild healthy strength and mysterious charm which runs and ripples in rough words. The French language and French declamation are, like the people themselves, only adapted to the day or the present time; the twilight realm of association (*Errinerung*) and deep presentiment is closed to them; it flourishes only in the light of the sun, and from that results its beautiful clearness and warmth. Night, with its pale moonshine, mystical stars, sweet dreams, and terrible spectres, are to them strange and uncomfortable.

But as regards true acting, French players surpass their colleagues in all other countries, for the very natural reason that all Frenchmen are born actors. It is really a pleasure to see how readily they learn their parts in every situation of life, and fall into them and clothe themselves to such advantage. The French are God's own court-players, *les comédiens ordinaires du bon*

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Dieu, a select troupe; and all French history often seems to me like a great comedy, but one played for the benefit of mankind. In their life, as well as in their literature and art, there prevails the theatrical.

As for us Germans, we are honest men and good citizens. What Nature denies we attain by study. It is only when we roar too loudly that we fear lest we frighten the folk in the dress circle, and are afraid of incurring punishment; and then we insinuate with a certain craftiness that we are not *real* lions, but only jesters sewed up in lions' skins, and such insinuations we call irony.[1] We are honourable, and it is the parts of honest people which we play best. State officials of fifty years' standing, trusty old twad-

[1] The "ironic" stage or phase—that which succeeds an era of decided humour—is now in full play in England, and to a far greater degree than it ever was in Germany. It is sometimes called "incisive," "subdued," or "latent" humour, but it covers an enormous amount of twaddle. Irony, or something which passes for it, is within the reach of the feeblest intellects, which even the coarsest real humour is not. As regards the French being the best actors in the world, it may be observed that it is only true as regards French subjects. An English actor would set forth any kind of a foreigner better than a Frenchman. One can hardly conceive of a Frenchman who has perfectly comprehended English or German intellect in every phase, but there have been many English who have been "French within the French" in all things, as Sainte-Beuve has proved. —*Translator.*

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dling retainers (*Dalners*), honest head-foresters, and true servants are our delight. Heroes give us some trouble and come rather hard (*werden aus sehr sauer*), but we can manage to find them, especially in garrison towns, where we have good patterns before our eyes. We are not so fortunate as to kings. Respect hinders us in royal residential cities from playing royal parts with absolute boldness; it might give offence, and so we let the shabby blouse of the peasant peep out under the royal ermine. In the German free cities, in Hamburg, Lübeck, Bremen, and Frankfort—in these glorious republics—actors may play the parts of monarchs as they please; but patriotism misleads them to intentionally represent such subjects as evilly as possible, so as to render kingship ridiculous. They aim directly at republicanism, and this is especially the case in Frankfort, where kings are more wretchedly played than anywhere else. If the eminently wise Senate there were not ungrateful, as all republics are, and as Athens, Rome, and Florence were, then Hamburg should erect a grand pantheon with the inscription, "The grateful country to its bad actors!"

Do you not remember, my dear Lewald, the late Schwarz, who in Hamburg played King Philip in "Don Carlos," and who always dragged out his words as if from the middle of the earth,

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and then shot them up to heaven, so that they were only in sight for a second?[1]

But not to be unjust, we must confess that the fault lies principally in the German language if the delivery is worse in our theatres than with the English and French. The speech of the first is a dialect, that of the latter a product of society; ours is neither one nor the other, and therefore it lacks naïve depth as well as fluent grace. It is only a book language, a bottomless abyss manufactured by authors, which we obtain from the Leipzig fair through the booksellers. The declamation of the English is the exaggeration of nature or over-natural; ours is *un*-natural. The delivery of the French is the affected tone of tirade; ours is pure lying. There is a traditional tearful tenderness (*Gegreine*) in our theatres, by which the best plays of Schiller are often spoiled for me, especially in sentimental passages, where our actresses melt into a watery flood of sing-song, of which Gulitz says they make water with their hearts.[2] But we will say nothing to the discredit of German actresses. They are my fellow-countrywomen, and then the geese saved

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[1] This paragraph is omitted in the French version. — *Translator.*

[2] This beautiful simile is omitted, probably by inadvertence, from the French version. It is in the original, *Sie p—ss—n mit dem Herzen.—Translator.*

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the Capitol, and there are so many virtuous women among them, and finally . . .

(I am here interrupted by the devil's own row —*tapage infernal*—which has broke loose in the churchyard under my window.)

. . . the crowd of boys who were just before dancing as peaceably as mice round the great tree all at once began to raise the old Adam, or rather the old Cain, and to bang one another (*Einander zu balgen*). I was obliged, in order to re-establish peace, to go down unto them, and verily I had a hard time of it to pacify the minor multitude. There was a small youth who laid it on with special rage to the back of another little boy. And when I asked him what the poor child had done to be so mauled, he stared at me with his great eyes and said, "Why, it's my brother!"

Nor does eternal peace flourish to-day within doors in my house. I hear in the corridor a racket as if an ode by Klopstock had rolled downstairs. My host and hostess are at it again, quarrelling, and the latter reproaches the poor man for being a spendthrift and squandering her dowry, and declares that she is dying of vexation. Ill she is, but with avarice. Every mouthful which the man eats is indigestible to her, hurts her; and when he takes medicine, if there be any left in the bottle, she drinks it, so that nothing may be lost of what cost so much money, and so falls ill.

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The poor man, a tailor by nation and a German by trade, has retired into the country to enjoy his remaining days in rural peace, but this peace he will find only in the grave of his wife. It may be that it was for this reason he bought a house close by the churchyard, and gazes so wistfully on the resting-places of the dead. His only joys on earth are tobacco and roses, and he knows how to grow the most beautiful varieties of the latter. This morning he placed several pots of them in the parterre under my window. They bloom admirably. But, my dear Lewald, ask your wife why these flowers have no perfume? Either they have a bad cold—or I.

Heine's comments on Edmund Kean in this paper express, better than anything I have elsewhere read, the peculiar and mysterious nature of this great man's acting, causing a regret that the more amplified comments on the subject were lost. His views on irony—by which he means something corresponding exactly to the New Humour—appear in another form in the *Reisebilder*.

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EIGHTH LETTER.

I HAVE spoken in a preceding letter of the two *coryphées* or chorus-leaders of the French drama. However, it was not the names of Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas which were in the greatest renown among the theatres of the Boulevard. Here there were three names which rang continually in the mouths of the people.

These names were those of Mallefile, Rougemont, and Bourchardy. From the first I hope for the best. He has, I think, great poetic capacity. You remember, perhaps, his "Seven Children of Lara," a drama of horrors, which we once saw together at the Porte Saint-Martin. In this fearful mess of blood and mud and stage rage there were many remarkably beautiful and truly dignified scenes which indicated a romantic imagination and dramatic talent. Another tragedy of Mallefile, "Glenarvon," is of much greater value, as it is less confused or obscure, and contains an exposition which is overwhelmingly grand and beautiful. In both pieces the

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part of the adulterous mother is admirably played by Mademoiselle Georges, that immensely bright and shining sun of flesh who illuminates the theatrical heaven of the Boulevards. Mallefile gave us some months ago a new piece called *Le Paysan des Alpes*—the Alpine Shepherd. This he worked out with greater simplicity, but at the expense of poetry. This piece is weaker than his earlier tragedies. In it, as in them, the barriers of marriage are pathetically demolished.

Rougemont, the second laureate of the Boulevards, established his renown by three plays which appeared one after the other within the short space of six months, and enjoyed a great success. The first was called *La Duchesse de Lavaubalière*, a feeble piece of hack-work (*Machwerk*), in which there is a great deal of action, yet which is not developed in a manner which is either bold or natural, but always carefully worked out by petty calculation, and, in keeping with this, all its outward passion has only a simulated glow, while all within is clammy and cold as a graveworm. His second piece, entitled *Léon*, is better, and though it suffers from the same defects as the preceding, it still contains some grand and moving scenes. Last week I saw the third piece, *Eulalie Granger*, a purely middle-class drama, which is an excellent work, since in it the author

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obeys the promptings of his natural talent, and sets forth in a beautiful picture, well framed and with great clearness of judgment, the sad incongruities of modern society.

We have had thus far from Bourchardy, the third laureate, but a single piece, yet one which has been rewarded with unexampled results. It is called *Gaspardo*. It has been played daily for five months, and should it continue thus, it may have a run of several hundred nights.[1] But honourably confessed, my judgment is at a standstill when I reflect on the ultimate cause or reason of this colossal success. The piece is of only mediocre merit, where it is not absolutely bad; and it is full of action, but in it one incident comes stumbling in on the head of another, so that one effect breaks the neck of the next. The conception or plot (*Gedanke*), in which the whole moves, is so narrow that not a single character nor situation can develop itself naturally nor properly. This heaping up of incident and material is indeed to be found in excess in the stage poets before described, but in *Gaspardo* the author has gone far beyond them. Yet all of this was predetermined and a principle, as several

[1] Doubtless. "If it should keep going long enough, then it will have a run," is a manifest truth, which would elicit roars of applause were it to be uttered by an Irishman on the stage.—*Translator.*

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young dramatists assure me, and it is by this accumulation of heterogeneous stuff and characters, times and localities, that the present Romanticist distinguishes himself from the former Classicists, who kept themselves so strictly within the narrow limits of the drama to the unities of time, place, and action.

Have these innovators really enlarged the limits of the French theatre? I do not know. But these French dramatic authors always remind me of the jailor who complained that his prison was too small, and who could find no better way to enlarge it than to keep cramming in more and more prisoners, who, however, instead of squeezing out the walls, crowded one another to death.[1]

By the way, I add that in *Gaspardo* and *Eulalie Granger*, as in all the Dionysiac games or plays of the Boulevards, marriage is slaughtered like a scapegoat.[2]

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[1] Told in another form by me in the United States just before the civil war, as follows:—

"The South are always crying out for more land whereon to put their niggers, and more niggers for their land, in which they are like the superintendent of a penitentiary in Ohio, who was always wanting more cells for his prisoners and more prisoners for his cells. This jailor had the idea that the whole human race, except his family and himself, ought to be imprisoned." —*Translator.*

[2] This passage is wanting in the French version.—*Translator.*

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I would willingly, my dear friend, discuss several other dramatists of the Boulevards, but though they now and then bring out a piece which may pass (*einverdauliches Stuck*), all that we find in them is that ease of treatment which is common to all French writers, but no originality of conception whatever. And so I have only seen the plays and soon forgotten them, and never took the trouble to find out the names of their authors. In their place I can give you those of the eunuchs who served King Ahasuerus as chamberlains in Susa, and their names were Mehuman, Bistha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Sethar, and Charkas.

The theatres of the Boulevards, of which I have spoken, and which I have always had in my mind while writing these letters, are the true resorts of the people. They begin at the Porte Saint-Martin, and run in a line along the Boulevard du Temple, ever diminishing in importance and value. Indeed, this local rank and range is very correct. First of all we have the theatre which bears the name of the Porte Saint-Martin, and which is the best theatre for the drama in Paris. There the works of Victor Hugo and of Dumas are most admirably given by an excellent troupe, in which are Mademoiselle Georges and Bocage. Then comes the Ambigu-Comique, which is inferior as regards plays and actors, yet where

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the Romantic drama is still given. Then we come to Franconi's, which cannot properly be included among my subjects, since they there give plays written more for horses than for men. Then we have La Gaieté, a theatre which was burned down not long ago, but which is now rebuilt in a style corresponding externally and internally to its name. The Romantic drama has here also rights of citizenship, and here too, even in this pleasant place, tears flow and hearts beat with the most terrible emotions; but there is on the whole more singing and laughter, and here the vaudeville often comes lightly trilling forth.

It is much the same in the neighbouring building, Les Folies Dramatiques, which gives dramas, and even more vaudevilles; but this theatre is by no means bad, and I have seen many a good piece there well brought out. Following the Folies Dramatiques in direction as well as in decreasing quality, is the theatre of Madame Saqui, where there are also dramas, but of the wretchedest quality, with miserable music-hall pieces (*Singspässe*), which finally degenerate in the neighbouring Funambules (the rope-dancers) to the grossest farces. Here, however, one of the most comical of clowns (*Pierrots*), the famous Debureau, cuts his white flour-faced grimaces. And behind this, again, I discovered

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a very small theatre where they play as badly as possible, where badness reaches its extreme limits, and art is nailed up with boards.

Since you left Paris a new theatre has been built at the very extremity of the Boulevards, near the Bastile, and it is called the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Antoine. It is in every respect *hors de ligne*, and it cannot be ranked, either as regards artistic or local position, among the theatres of the Boulevard which I have described. And it is as yet too new for me to decide as to the exact measure of its merits. It is near the Place de la Bastile, as I said, and I saw in it not long ago a drama bearing the name of the prison, in which there were some very striking scenes. The heroine was of course a married lady, wife of the governor or jailor, and she escapes with a prisoner of state. I there also saw a good comedy called *Mariez-vous, donc*, setting forth the sorrows of a husband who could find or make no *mariage de convenance* in good society, and so weds a pretty girl from among the people. The young wife takes a cousin for a lover; this latter and the mother-in-law unite in enmity against the husband, whom they ruin by extravagant luxury and disorder. To make a living for his family, the poor devil is obliged to open at the Barrier a pot-house and dance-hall

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for the lowest class. When a quadrille was not complete, he made his seven-year-old son dance in it, and this infant had already learned how to vary his steps with the most indecent pantomime of the *chahut*. In this situation the father is found by a friend, to whom the poor man, violin in hand, while fiddling, jumping, and calling out the figures, relates during the pauses all his family troubles. One can imagine nothing more painful than this contrast of the narrative and the occupation of the narrator, who must often break off his bitter story with a *chassez!* a *en avant deux!* and spring into the figure and dance himself. The music of the *contre-danse* which melodramatically accompanies this story of married woes, with its pretty melodies associated with so much gaiety and cheerfulness, here form a contrast of irony which cuts to the heart. I could not join in the roars of laughter of all around. But I did laugh, and that only at the father-in-law, an old toper who has drunk up house and home, and who must at last beg for a living. But his style of begging is original and humorous. He is a fat lazy-belly with a tippling red face—*un gros fainéant à rouge trogne de buveur*—and he leads about with a cord a wretched blind dog whom he calls his Belisarius. Man, he declares, is ungrateful to dogs,

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who so often, as trusty guides, lead blind men about; and he will repay them this debt due to their philanthropy, and so leads a blind dog—his dear Belisarius.

I laughed so heartily at this that my neighbours certainly thought I was the *chatouilleur* or tickler of the theatre.

Do you know what a *chatouilleur* is? I myself only recently learned its meaning, and I owe the information to my barber, whose brother has the situation of *chatouilleur* in a theatre on the Boulevards. He is paid to attend comedies, and, whenever a witticism is uttered, to burst into a roar of laughter, so as to excite it in all about him. This is a very important situation, and the success of many farces depends entirely on it. For the good jokes are often fearfully bad, and the public might never notice them at all did not the *chatouilleur*, by the infinitely varied modulations of his laughter, from a subdued chuckle up to the most tremendous horse-laugh, know how to spread the contagion of merriment. Laughter has, like yawning, an epidemic character, and I recommend you to introduce the *chatouilleur* to the German stage. Yawners you have already in abundance. But it is not so easy to fulfil its functions, for, as my barber assures me, it requires a great deal of talent. His brother has practised it for fifteen years, and brought it to such

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a virtuoso force, that he has but to raise one of his finer, half-subdued, half-involuntary sniggers to make the whole audience roar. "He is a man of talent," added my barber, "and earns more money than I do; for besides being a laugher, he is also a regular mourner at the *pompes funèbres*, and he often attends as many as five or six funerals of a morning. Ah! if you could see him in his raven-black suit of clothes, with his white handkerchief and sorrowful face—why, he can look so sad that one would swear he was following the funeral of his own father!"

Really, my dear Lewald, I am full of respect for such brilliant versatility, and yet for all the money in the world would not fulfil the functions of that man. Fancy—I say fancy—how terrible it must be in a fine morning in spring, when one has enjoyed a delightful cup of coffee, and the sun smiles into your very heart, to have to assume a long funeral face (*Leichenbittermiene*) and to shed tears for some small grocer whom one probably did not know, and whose death can only benefit you to the extent of seven francs and ten sous. And then, when one has returned six times from churchyards, and is dead-tired and ready to die of mourning and misery, to have to laugh all the evening—aye, laugh at all the wretched tips which one has laughed at so often—laugh

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with all your face, and with every muscle—with all the convulsions of body and soul—to wake to laughter a *blasé* pit. . . .

It *is* awful! I had rather be the King of France.[1]

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[1] Heine here does not quite understand the business of the *chatouilleur* or tickler, so called because he is supposed to increase gaiety and thereby stimulate interest. A great many even of the very best jests or witticisms are not caught in ordinary conversation (especially when they are not deliberately set forth as droll) by ordinary minds. I once knew a man who prided himself on being able to pass off the most exquisite bits of humour in talking so that no one could perceive them, and his success was great. The *chatouilleur* points out good things, which may be indeed admirable, and which might in the haste of action and dialogue be lost. Now that "subdued irony" prevails, there is no occasion for a tickler to awake us to a sense of jokes—there being none—only a subdued sense of "something smileable."—*Translator.*

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NINTH LETTER.[1]

BUT what is music?

This question occupied my mind last night for full an hour before I fell asleep. There is something marvellous in music—I may say that it is a marvel. It has a place between thought and what is seen; it is a dim mediator between spirit and matter, allied to and differing from both; it is spirit wanting the measure of time and matter which can dispense with space.

No, we do not know what music is. But what good music is, is certainly known to us, and, better still, that which is bad; for we have all heard a great deal of the latter. Musical criticism can only base itself upon experience, not on synthesis; it should only classify musical works according to their similarity, and take the impression deduced from the whole as standard.

Nothing is more inadequate than theorising in

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[1] The ninth and tenth letters of this series are omitted in the French version.

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music. Here there are indeed laws, mathematically determined laws. Yet these laws are not music, but its conditions, just as the art of drawing and the theory of colours, or even palette and brush, are not painting, but only means needful for it. The soul of music is revelation; there can be no accurate account thereof, and true musical criticism is a science of experience.

I know of nothing more wearisome than a criticism by Monsieur Fetis, or by his son Monsieur Fœtus,[1] in which the value or worthlessness of a musical work is proved by *à priori* reasoning from final grounds. Such critiques, composed in a kind of *argot*, are larded with technical expressions not familiar to the generally cultivated world, but only to practical artists, yet which give to their rubbish (*leeren Gewäsche*) an air which imposes on the multitude. As my friend Detmold has written, as regards painting, a manual by means of which any one can become a connoisseur in two lessons, so should some one by means of an ironical vocabulary of musical critic phrases and orchestra jargon put an end to the

[1] Unless, indeed, it be the too frequent assurance that *nothing* is more wearisome or more inadequate, and so on. When a superlative of anything has been once declared, there can be no duplicates. Heine is as bad as Poe's "Raven," with his "Never"—or "Nothing more."—*Translator.*

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mere tirade-work of Fetis and Fœtus. The very best musical criticism—the only kind, perhaps, which proves anything—I heard last year in Marseilles at a *table-d'hôte* where two *commis-voyageurs* disputed over the topic of the day, as to whether Rossini or Meyerbeer was the greatest master. As soon as one declared that the Italian had pre-excellence, the other replied, not however with dry words, but by trilling several particularly beautiful airs from *Robert le Diable*. Thereupon, the other could make no keener retort than to sing with zeal fragments from the *Barber of Seville*, and so the two kept it up all through the dinner. Instead of a noisy war of worthless words, they gave us admirable table-music, and I finally admitted that people should either never dispute at all as to music, or, if they must, let it be in this realistic illustrative manner.

You see, my dear friend, that I shall not burden you with hackneyed (*herkömmlichen*) phrases as regards the opera. Yet, in speaking of the French stage, I cannot leave the latter all unnoticed. Nor need you fear from me any comparative discussion of Rossini and Meyerbeer in wonted fashion.[1] I limit myself to loving both, nor would I praise one at the expense of the other.

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[1] This is the due notification that a tremendous comparison of the two, in quite wonted fashion, is coming.—*Translator.*

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If I sympathise a little more perhaps with the former than with the latter, it is only a private or personal feeling, and in no respect a recognition of greater merit. Perhaps it is unvirtuous qualities (*Untugenden*) which chime in echo to so many unvirtues corresponding by elective affinity in myself. By nature I incline to a certain *dolce far niente*, and I like to loll on flowery banks and gaze upon the calmly passing clouds, and take joy in the light upon them; but chance wills it that I must be very often awakened from such comfortable dreaming or visioning by hard knocks in the ribs administered by fate. Yes, I must by compulsion take part in the sufferings and battles of the time; and my share therein was honourable, and I battled against the bravest.[1] . . . But I know not how I shall express myself; in *my* feelings there was always a certain difference from those of others. I knew what their feelings were, but mine were unlike theirs; and when I rode my war-horse ever so wildly and daringly, and struck so mercilessly at

[1] One would really like to know when, where, and how all this tremendous fighting, of which Heine boasts so much, ever came off, unless it is that he alludes to his ribald onslaughts on such folk as Platen, the Schlegels, Raupach, and one or two women; most of which recalls what was said of a New York journalist, that he was the bravest man who ever lived, because nobody ever beat him in blackguarding.—*Translator.*

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the enemy with my sword, still I never felt the fever nor the joy nor the agony of battle; my own inner calm seemed to me uncanny. I observed that my thoughts lingered elsewhere, while I fought in the thickest press of party strife; and I often seemed to myself like Ogier the Dane, who fought the Saracens while walking in his sleep. Rossini must needs correspond more nearly to such a man than does Meyerbeer, and yet at certain times the man will assuredly enthusiastically adore the latter, though he may not throw his whole soul towards him. For it is on the waves of Rossini's music that there are rocked as in a boat most at their ease the individual joys and sorrows of man—love and hate, tenderness and yearning, jealousy and sulkiness. Everything is here the isolated feeling of a single mind. Therefore the predominance of melody, which is always the direct expression of isolated sentiment (*isolirten Empfindens*).[1] But in Meyerbeer harmony governs, and the melodies die away, yea, are drowned in the stream of harmonious masses, just as the characteristic feelings of single men are lost in the united feeling of a whole race, and our soul gladly throws itself into this harmonious flood

[1] Perceptive feelings, or susceptibility in its *true*, not exaggerated sense.—*Translator.*

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when it is inspired and seized by the joys and sorrows of all mankind, and takes part in the great questions of society. Meyerbeer's music is rather social than individual; and the grateful present, which finds its internal and external strifes, its differences of feeling and its differences of personal opinion (*Willenskampf*), its needs and hopes, in his music, exults in or exalts (*feiert*) its own passion and inspiration while it applauds the great master. Rossini's music was better adapted to the time of the Restoration, when, after great struggles and disillusions, enthusiasm for their great common interests, among men who were wearied of it all, passed into the background, and a realisation of their own personality (*Ichkeit*) began to again assume its legitimate rights. Rossini would never have attained his great popularity during the Revolution or in the days of the Empire. Robespierre would perhaps have accused him of anti-patriotic, moderating melodies, and Napoleon certainly would not have appointed him master of music for the *grand armée*, where a universal inspiration was required. Poor Swan of Pesaro! the Gallic cock and the Imperial eagle would perhaps have torn thee, and fitter far for thee than battlefields of *bourgeois* virtue and fame would have been some silent lake on whose banks the tender lilies would have gently and peacefully bowed to thee, and

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where thou couldst have swum calmly here and there, with beauty and loveliness in every movement. The Restoration was Rossini's time of triumph, and even the stars of heaven, who were then holding their eve of repose, and had ceased to trouble themselves with the affairs of mankind, listened to him enraptured.

But meantime the Revolution of July had caused a vast movement in heaven and on earth. Stars and men, angels and kings, yea, even God himself, were rapt from their life of peace, had once more a great deal to do, had to arrange a new era, had neither leisure nor repose enough of soul to enjoy the melodies of private feelings; and only when the great chorus of *Robert le Diable* or of the *Huguenots* harmoniously growled, harmoniously exulted, harmoniously sobbed and sighed, did their hearts listen, and sob and sigh, exult and growl, in inspired unity with it.

This is perhaps the ultimate foundation, a real reason of that unheard-of colossal approbation which the two operas of Meyerbeer enjoy through all the world. He is the man of his time, and the time, which always knows how to choose its men, has, with a tumult, raised him on the shield and proclaimed his mastery and dominion, and makes with him triumphal entrance. Yet it is not such a very comfortable position when one is carried in triumph. By a stumble, or by the

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awkwardness of one of the shield-bearers, one may be sadly jolted, if not badly injured; the garlands and bouquets which are thrown at the conqueror's head may now and then wound more than gratify, if they at least do not defile when thrown by dirty hands; and the overload of laurels may at least cause a sweating of anxiety. When Rossini meets such a procession, he laughs ironically with his Italian lips, and bewails his digestion, which becomes worse day by day, so that he can eat nothing.

Which is a hard case, for Rossini was always one of the greatest of gourmands. Meyerbeer is just the contrary; he is in his pleasures, as in his external appearance, modesty itself. It is only when he invites friends that he has a good table. Once when I dropped in to dine with him, *à la fortune du pot*, and take pot-luck, I found him over a poor dish of dried cod-fish (*Stockfische*), which was all his meal; on seeing which, I naturally declared that I had already dined.

Many say that he is miserly, but it is not true. He is only parsimonious as regards his own personal expenses. He is, as regards others, prodigality itself, and his poor fellow-countrymen have benefited by this even unto abuse. Benevolence is a household virtue among the Meyerbeers, especially with the mother, to whom I send pack-

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ing all who need charity, and never in vain. This woman is, however, the most fortunate mother in the world. The renown of her son rings round her wherever she goes or stands; everywhere she hears scraps of his music, everywhere there shines his fame; and in the opera, where an entire public expresses its enthusiasm for Giacomo in noisiest applause, her mother's heart beats with raptures which we can hardly imagine. I know of but one mother in all the history of the world who is to be compared to her. That was the mother of San Carlo Borromeo, who during her life saw her son canonised, and who in the church among thousands of believers could kneel and pray to him.

Meyerbeer is now writing a new opera, which I anticipate with great eagerness. The development of this genius is for me a very notable drama. I follow with interest the phases of his musical as well as of his personal life, and observe the mutual influences existing between him and his European public. It is now ten years since I first met him in Berlin, between the University and the watch-house, between learning and the drum-beat, and he seemed to feel himself sadly crammed and confined in such a situation. I remember that I met him in the company of Dr. Marx, who then belonged to a certain musical regency, which, during the minority of a certain youthful

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genius, who was regarded as the legitimate royal heir of Mozart, paid constant homage to Sebastian Bach. The enthusiasm for Sebastian Bach was not only intended to fill that interregnum, but also to ruin the reputation of Rossini, whom the regency chiefly feared, and also mostly hated. Meyerbeer then passed for a follower of Rossini, and Dr. Marx treated him with a certain condescension and affable air of superiority at which I must needs now laugh heartily. Rossinism was then the great fault or failing of Meyerbeer; he was still far from the honour to be opposed to him in person. He wisely refrained from all pretension, and when I once told him with what enthusiasm I had lately seen his *Crociato* received in Italy, he smiled with an eccentric sadness and said, "You compromise yourself by praising me, a poor Italian, here in Berlin, in the capital of Sebastian Bach."

Meyerbeer in those days had really become entirely an imitator of the Italians. Discontent with the clammy, cold, deliberately witty, colourless Berlinism had at an early period produced in him a natural reaction; he escaped to Italy; gaily enjoyed his life; gave himself altogether up to his private feelings, and there composed those exquisite operas in which Rossinism is heightened with the most charming exaggeration, where the gold is over-gilt, and the flower

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perfumed with more flagrant odours. That was the happy time of Meyerbeer, he wrote in an enraptured revel of Italian sensuality, and plucked the fairest flowers of life or art.

But that could not long satisfy a German nature. A certain home-sickness for the seriousness of his native land awoke in him, and while he lounged under Italian myrtles, there stole over him memories of the mysterious strange awe in German forests, and while southern zephyrs fanned him, he thought of the dark chorals of the north wind. He felt perhaps as did Madame de Sévigné, who, when dwelling near an orangerie, and constantly perfumed with orange flowers, began at last to long for the smell of a manure cart. In short, a new reaction took place. Signore Giacomo suddenly became once more a German, and again allied himself to Germany—not to the old, decayed, lived-out Germany of narrow-hearted petty *bourgeoisie*, but to the young great-hearted, cosmopolite Germany of a new generation, which has made all questions of humanity its own, and which has inscribed, if not on its banner, yet all the more indelibly, the greatest problems of mankind on its heart.

Soon after the Revolution of July, Meyerbeer came before the public with a new work, which, during the storm (*Wehen*) of that Revolution, had sprung from his soul; with *Robert le Diable*,

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the hero who knows not what he will or would, who is ever at war with himself, a true picture of the moral irresolution of that epoch, a time which in tortured restlessness fluttered between virtue and vice, which fretted and exasperated itself amid efforts and hindrances, and which never had strength enough to resist the attacks of Satan! I do not in any respect like this opera, this masterpiece of timid, faint-heartedness. I say faint-heartedness not only as regards the subject, but the exertion, since the composer in it does not trust to his genius, does not dare to surrender himself to his full will, and, trembling, ministers to the multitude instead of boldly commanding it.

Meyerbeer was then called, quite correctly, an anxious genius; there was wanting a conquering faith in himself; he showed himself afraid of public opinion; the least blame frightened him; he flattered all the caprices of the public, and shook hands right and left with everybody most earnestly, as if he had recognised in music itself the sovereignty of the people, and would found his government on a majority of votes; unlike Rossini, who ruled absolutely in the realm of the art of sweet sounds. This anxiety has not left him as yet in life; he is still deeply concerned as to public opinion, but the result of *Robert le Diable* was thus far

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fortunate for him that he was not worried with such care while working; that he composed with greater certainty; that he allowed the great will of his soul to show itself in its creations. With this extended freedom of soul, he wrote the *Huguenots*, in which all doubt and indecision disappeared; the inner strife with self ceased, and the external conflict began, whose colossal form amazes us. By this work Meyerbeer won for himself his immortal right of citizenship in the eternal spiritual city (*Geisterstadt*), in the Heavenly Jerusalem of art. It was in the *Huguenots* that Meyerbeer finally revealed himself without fear; in it he drew with bold outlines all his thoughts, and here he dared to utter as boldly all which inspired his heart in unrestrained tones.

What specially distinguishes this work is the symmetry or due proportion in it between enthusiasm and artistic finish, or, to better express myself, the equal height which passion and art attain in it. Here the man and the artist have competed, and while the former rings the alarm-bell of the wildest passions, the latter transforms the rude chords of nature to the most thrilling and sweetest euphony. While the multitude are carried away by the inner strength and the passion of the *Huguenots*, he who is versed in art admires the mastery which is manifest in

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the form. This work is a Gothic cathedral, whose columns rising to heaven, and whose colossal dome, seem to have been raised by the bold hand of a giant; while the innumerable daintily fine festoons, rosettes, and arabesques which are spread over it, like a veil of lace in stone, testify to the unwearied patience of dwarfs. A giant in the conception and forming of the whole, a dwarf in the laborious execution of details, the architect of the *Huguenots* is as far beyond our intelligence as the composers of the old cathedrals. When I lately stood with a friend before that of Amiens, and he beheld with awe and pity that monument of giant strength in towering stone, and of dwarfish patience in minute sculpture, he asked me how it happens that we can no longer build such piles? I replied, "Dear Alphonse, men in those days had convictions; we moderns have opinions, and it requires something more than an opinion to build such a Gothic cathedral."

There it is. Meyerbeer is a man of conviction. This does not really refer to the social questions of the day, though even in this respect Meyerbeer has more firmly settled ideas than other artists. Meyerbeer, who has been loaded by all the princes on earth with all possible orders and honours, and who has also so great a fondness for such distinctions, still has a heart

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which glows for the holiest interests of humanity, and he plainly confesses his regard for the heroes of the Revolution. It is well for him that many northern sovereigns do not understand music, or they would find in the *Huguenots* something more than a strife between Protestants and Huguenots. And yet his convictions are not really of a political, much less of a religious kind. Certainly they are not of the latter; his religion is merely negative; it only consists in this, that he, unlike other artists, be it from pride, will not defile his lips with any lie, and that he turns away from certain officious intrusive blessings, the acceptation of which must always be regarded as an equivocal, and never as a noble act.

Meyerbeer's real religion is that of Mozart, Gluck, or Beethoven; it is music—he believes only in it; it is only in this faith that he believes; in it only will he find his happiness, and he holds to a belief which is like that of earlier ages in depth, passion, and duration. Yes, I would even say that he is the apostle of this religion. All that which concerns his music he treats as with apostolic zeal and impulse; while other artists are contented if they have composed something fine, and indeed often lose all interest for their work as soon as it is finished, the great anxiety as to the child with Meyerbeer begins, on the

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contrary, after its birth; he is not content till the creation of his intellect reveals itself in full brilliancy to others, till the whole public is edified by his music, till his opera has poured its sentiments into every heart—sentiments which he will preach to the whole world and communicate unto all mankind.[1] As the apostle heeded neither weariness nor pain to rescue a single lost soul, so Meyerbeer, when he hears that any one rejects his music, waylays him unweariedly until he is converted, and this one lost sheep, be it the soul of the smallest *feuilletoniste* or newspaper scribbler, is dearer to him than the whole flock of believers who revere him with orthodox faith.[2]

Music is the conviction of Meyerbeer, and that is perhaps the cause of all the deep anxieties and troubles of which the great master so often publicly proclaims, and which often cause us to smile. One should see him when he is preparing to bring out a new opera. Then he is the

[1] This instance of repetition is a mere trifle to one or two others which occur in this sermon on Meyerbeer, which superfluities I have charitably suppressed.—*Translator.*

[2] This was amusingly set forth in an article by some Parisian journalist, in which Meyerbeer was represented as being in despair and anxiety for a long time, and indifferent to all honours and applause, because he had found out that a fourth flutist or drummer in the orchestra had but an indifferent opinion of his merits as a composer.—*Translator.*

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tormenting spirit of all the musicians and singers, whom he goads with incessant rehearsals. He is never, never contented. A single false note in the orchestra is the stab of a dagger in his heart, which he thinks is a death-wound. This anxiety torments him even after the opera has been sung and received with thunders of applause. He still worries and wearies over it; nor do I believe that he is at peace until some thousands of people who have heard and admired his opera have died and are buried. From these he has no cause to fear a change of opinion—their souls are secured to him.

On the day when his opera is to be brought out, God himself cannot content or pacify him. Should it rain and be cold, he fears lest Mademoiselle Falcon catch cold; but if the evening is fine and warm, then the pleasant weather will tempt people into the open air and away from the theatre, which will then be empty. Nothing is to be compared to the painful accuracy with which Meyerbeer corrects his proofs when his music is at last printed, and this has become proverbial among Parisian artists. But one should remember that music is dearer unto him than all on earth—yes, dearer far than is his life itself. When the cholera began to rage in Paris, I implored him to flee as soon as possible, but he had, as he averred, affairs which he

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absolutely could not put off—he had to arrange with an Italian the Italian libretto for *Robert le Diable.*

And the *Huguenots* is, much more than *Robert le Diable,* a work of conviction both as regards subject and form. As I have observed, while the great multitude is carried away by the subject, the calmer observer admires the vast progress of art and the new forms which show themselves. According to the opinions of the most competent judges, all musicians who would write for the opera must first study the *Huguenots.* Meyerbeer has brought instrumentation farther than any one before him. His management of the choruses, which here speak like individuals and have abandoned operatic tradition, is unheard of. Since *Don Juan* there has been assuredly no greater phenomenon in the realm of music than that fourth act of the *Huguenots,* where, in the terribly affecting scene of the consecration of the swords —a blessing of the lust for murder—there is given a duet which surpasses what preceded it —a colossally daring effort, of which one would hardly have believed such an apprehensive genius capable, yet whose success awakens as much our delight as our astonishment. As for me, I believe that Meyerbeer did not solve this problem by means of art, but by natural methods, since that famous duet expresses a series of feel-

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ings which were perhaps never before given in an opera, certainly never with such truthfulness, and yet for which the wildest sympathy flamed up in the souls of all of the present day. And I confess that my heart never beat so wildly at hearing any music as in the fourth act of the *Huguenots;* and yet I gladly avoid this act and its terrible excitement, and listen with far greater pleasure to the second act. This is an idyll more abundant in intrinsic merit (*gehaltvolleres*), which in fascination and grace recalls the romantic comedies of Shakespeare, and which is yet, however, more like the *Aminta* of Tasso. And indeed among its roses of delight there lurks a gentle melancholy which recalls the ill-fated court-poet of Ferrara. It is more the yearning for joyous merriment than joy itself; it is no laughter from the heart, but a smile of the heart, a heart which is secretly sick and can only dream of health. How comes it that an artist who from his cradle onwards has had all the blood-sucking cares of life fanned away, who, born in the lap of wealth, was fondled and pampered by the whole family, who willingly, nay, enthusiastically indulged all his fancies, and who seemed more than any mortal artist to be born to good luck—how comes it that he experienced those stupendous sorrows which sigh and sob to us in his music? For what he has not felt himself, no

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musician can utter so powerfully, so overwhelmingly. It is wonderful that the artist whose material wants are satisfied is the more intolerably tortured by moral afflictions; but it is fortunate for the public, which owes its most ideal joys to the artist's sufferings. The artist is that child of whom the fairy tale relates that all his tears are pearls. But oh! the cruel stepmother, the world, beats the poor child the more unmercifully to make it weep as many tears as possible.

It is generally declared that there are fewer melodies in the *Huguenots* than in *Robert le Diable*. This accusation is based on an error. "We do not see the forest for the leaves." Melody is here subordinate to harmony, and I have already intimated by a comparison with the purely human individual music of Rossini, in which the reverse is the case, that it is this predominance of harmony which characterises the music of Meyerbeer as a humanly inspired socially modern music. Melodies are not really wanting in it, but they do not obtrude themselves disturbingly prominent like rocks, or, as I may say, egoistically; they serve for the whole, and are disciplined, while with the Italians the melodies are isolated, I might almost say outlawed, and come out and show themselves like their famous bandits. One does not notice it. Many a

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common soldier fights as bravely as (a Fra Diavolo) the single Calabrian robber and hero whose personal bravery would less surprise us if he fought in rank and file among regular troops. I will not on my life deny the rights of predominance to melody, but I must remark that in Italy we see the result of it in that indifference to the *ensemble* of an opera, or to the opera as a finished whole, and which expresses itself so naïvely that people in the boxes receive visits, talk without restraint, and perhaps play cards while no *bravuras* are being sung.

The predominance of harmony in the creations of Meyerbeer is perhaps a necessary consequence of his vast education or culture, which embraces the realm of thought and of things (*der Erscheinungen*). Treasures were spent on that education, and his intellect was receptive; he was at early age initiated into all branches of learning, and herein he differs from most musicians, whose brilliant ignorance is to a degree pardonable, because they generally lack means and time to acquire much knowledge out of their calling.[1]

[1] "Kindly said and often pled." But how was it that the artists of all kinds, musicians included, of the Renaissance, who were quite as poor as those of the present day, or, in fact, all things considered, much poorer, contrived to educate themselves as they did? It certainly was not money alone which made a Lionardo da Vinci or Michael Angelo, a Benvenuto Cellini or

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Erudition was to him nature, and the school of the world gave him the highest development; he belongs to that very limited class of Germans whom even France must recognise as a pattern of refinement and politeness (*Urbanität*). Such a height of culture was perhaps necessary to collect and put into shape with perfect confidence such a creation as the *Huguenots*. But did he not lose in other respects that which he gained in breadth of comprehension and clearness of perception? Culture destroys in the artist that accentuation, that vividness and sharpness of colour (*Schröffe Farbung*), that originality of thought, that directness of feeling which we admire so much in rudely limited, uncultivated natures.

Culture is always expensive, and little Blanka is in the right. She is about eight years old, and a daughter of Meyerbeer. One day she envied the idle leisure of the small boys and girls whom she saw playing in the street, and said, "What a pity that I have well-educated

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Dürer or Salvator Rosa or Stradella. In fact, the majority of all the great earlier artists were men of vast and varied culture It is said that all the genius of the present day is directed to engineering and finance. *Non possum hæc cedere.* It requires a very different kind of genius from that of a Stephenson to form a Raphael. But I leave this thorny question to others.—*Translator.*

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parents! I must learn all kinds of things from morning to night by heart, and sit still and be good, while the ignorant children down there run round all day as happy as can be, amusing themselves!"[1]

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[1] Of this letter it may be truly said that Heine in it, as in many other papers, greatly overdoes the true mission or scope of art. Lessing in his *Laocoön* defined its limits, but although Heine praises the book, he never observed its precepts. The operas of *Robert le Diable* and *Les Huguenots* were great operas, but they did not carry the deepest conviction to mankind at large as to politics, religion, and all the most vital interests of humanity. Instrumentation of fiddles and bass-drums is not the solution of social problems, nor a brilliant duo a discussion of moral principles. According to our author, Meyerbeer preaches sentiments "to the whole world *and* all mankind." When humanity has sunk so low that Lydian airs cause it to forget all else, it is degraded in strength or manliness. Music after all is but wind, and it would seem that no one can write a great deal about it, outside its true sphere, without becoming, as Heine does, extremely windy.—*Translator.*

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TENTH LETTER.

WITH the exception of Meyerbeer, the Académie Royale de Musique has very few poets of sweet sounds (*Tondichter*) who are worth discussing in detail. And notwithstanding this, the French opera flourishes amazingly, or, to express myself more accurately, rejoices daily in large receipts. This condition of prosperity began six years ago, under the management of the famous Monsieur Veron, whose principles have since been applied by the new director, M. Duponchel, with the same result. I say principles, because, in fact, Veron had principles, the results of his researches in art and science; and just as he, while an apothecary, discovered an admirable remedy for coughs, so he as opera manager found an infallible cure for music. For he having discovered of himself that a melodramatic horse-play at Franconi's delighted him more than the best opera, he drew the conclusion that the public, for the greater part, had the same feelings, that most of them only went to the grand opera because other people did so (*aus Konvenienz*), and

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only enjoyed themselves there when beautiful scenery, costumes, and dancing attracted their attention to such a degree that the bothered (*fatale*) music was not heard at all. So there occurred to the great Veron the genial idea to gratify the public taste for shows to such a degree that the music could no longer trouble them in the least, and that they should find as much amusement as at Franconi's. The great Veron and the great public understood one another. He knew how to make music harmless, and gave under the name of "opera" nothing but show-and-splendour pieces; while It—the public—could go with its wives and daughters as became genteelly cultured people, without being bored to death. America was discovered, the egg stood on end; the opera-house was crowded every night; Franconi was outbid and became bankrupt, while M. Veron became a wealthy man. The name of Veron will live for ever in the annals of music; he greatly adorned the temple of the goddess, while he turned her out of doors. Nothing can surpass the luxury which has got the upper hand (*überhand genommen*) in the grand opera—it is now the paradise of the deaf.

The present director follows the principles of his predecessor, though he presents personally the most amusingly sharp contrast to the former. Did you ever see M. Veron? It must have

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often happened that you met on the Boulevard Coblence or in the Café de Paris this bulky caricature-like form, with a hat drawn deeply down on the head, which was entirely buried below in an immense white cravat, while the shirt-collars[1] rose above his ears so as to conceal a great scar, while very little of the red jolly face with its small blinking eyes is visible. In the full consciousness of his superior knowledge of mankind and of his success, he rolls about insolently at his ease, surrounded with a cortège of young, and here and there of older, dandies of literature, whom he usually treats to champagne, or beautiful dancing-girls. He is the god of sheer sensuous materialism, and his glance, sneering at all spirit or soul, cut to my heart painfully when I met him. It often seemed to me as if there crept from his eyes swarms of little sticky shining worms.

M. Duponchel is a lean, yellowish, pale man, who, if he has not a noble mien, is at least *distingué*, always sad, with a corpsely-bitter mien, so that somebody once called him correctly *un*

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[1] *Vatermörder*, literally "parricides;" so called because a German student in the days when such collars were made very high, projecting, and sharply pointed, had his so fashionably cut and highly starched, that when, after a long absence, he ran to embrace his father, one of the ends of the "dicky" ran through the parent's neck and killed him.—*Translator.*

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deuil perpetuel. From his personal appearance he might sooner be taken for the superintendent of Père la Chaise than the manager of the Grand Opera. He always reminds me of the melancholy court-fool of Louis XIII. This Knight of the Rueful Countenance is now the *maître de plaisir* of the Parisians, and I would like many a time to overhear him or read his soul when he, alone and at home, meditates new jests wherewith to delight his sovereign, the French people, when he with melancholy jester air shakes his sad head till the bells on his black cap ring as if sighing, while he colours for Mademoiselle Falcon the design of a new costume, or looks over the Red Book to see if Taglioni . . .[1] This book, which characterises the spirit of invention, and especially the mind itself, of the former manager, M. Veron, is certainly of practical utility. . . .

From the preceding remarks you will have comprehended the present value and significance of the French Grand Opera. It has made friends with the enemies of music, and as they have got into the Tuileries, so the prosperous citizens have forced their way into the Academy of Music,

[1] I here omit two pages of stupid nastiness, the perusal of which in the original I, however, earnestly commend to ladies who are of the opinion that "Heine is never vulgar."—*Translator.*

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while the better class of society has left the field. The refined aristocracy, or the *élite* which distinguishes itself by rank, culture, birth, fashion, and leisure, fled to the Italian opera, to that musical oasis where the great nightingales of art still warble, where the fountains of melody ever ripple with magic murmurs, and the palm trees of beauty waft applause as with proudly-waving fans, while all around there is a wan sandy wilderness, a Sahara of music. Only here and there in this wilderness rise a few good concerts, which are a marvellous refreshment to the friends of the art of sweet sounds. To these belonged this winter the Sundays of the Conservatory, a few private soirées in the Rue de Bondy, and especially the concerts of Berlioz and Liszt. The two latter were indeed the most remarkable musical phenomena in the musical world; I say the most remarkable, not the most beautiful or delightful. From Berlioz we are soon to have an opera, the subject of which will be an episode from the life of Benvenuto Cellini, or the casting of the Perseus.[1] Something

[1] Within an hour, and while correcting this proof, I passed and paused before the Perseus itself in Florence, and recalled the marvellous tale of its casting. By odd coincidence Heine tells us in the *Reisebilder* (chap. vi. *Ideas*, vol. i. p. 299) that the same difficulty occurred in casting the bronze statue of the Elector Jan Wilhelm in Dusseldorf which happened in making the Perseus.

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extraordinary is anticipated, because this composer has already given us extraordinary work. The direction of his mind is to the fantastic, not allied, however, to genial feeling (*Gemüth*), but to sentimentality. He greatly resembles Callot, Gozzi, and Hoffmann. His external appearance indicates this. It is a pity that he has had his hair cut, and so lost that stupendous, antediluvian *frisur* or bristling mane which fell over his brow like a forest over steep rocks. Thus he appeared when I saw him six years ago for the first time, and so will he ever remain fixed in my memory. It was in the Conservatoire de Musique, and there was given a great symphony by him, a bizarre nocturne, which was only lighted up now and then by a sentimental white feminine skirt which fluttered here and there, or by a brimstone yellow light of irony. The best thing in it is a Witches' Sabbath, in which the devil reads a mass, and the Catholic Church music is parodied with the most terrible and excruciating mockery. It is a farce in which all the mysterious, subtle serpents which we bear in our bosoms leap up hissing in rapture.

A young gentleman who sat by me in the box, who was talkative and lively, pointed out to me the composer, who sat at the extreme end of the hall, in a corner of the orchestra, and played on the kettledrum, for this is his instrument. "Do

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you see in the front scene," asked my neighbour, "that plump young English lady? That is Miss Smithson, with whom Berlioz has been for three years dead in love, and we may thank this passion for the wild symphony which you now hear." And, truly enough, there in the front scene or proscenium-box sat the celebrated actress of Covent Garden Theatre, while Berlioz stared steadily at her alone, and when her glance met his, then he pounded away on his drum like mad. . . .

Since then Miss Smithson has become Madame Berlioz, and her husband has had his hair cut. When I this winter again heard his symphony, he again sat drumming in the background of the orchestra; the plump English lady was, as before, in the proscenium-box. Their glances met as before, but this time he did not at once attack so furiously the drum, nor bang thereon as he had done of yore.

Liszt is next by affinity to Berlioz, and he best knows how to execute his music. I need tell you nothing of his talent; his fame is European. He is beyond all question the artist who attracts in Paris the most boundless enthusiasm, and also the most zealous opposition, which is a significant sign that no one regards him with indifference. Without positive intrinsic merit or a something in him firm (*Gehalt*), no one can awaken in this

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world either favourable passion nor its contrary. Fire is needed to inflame men, be it to hatred or love. What testifies best for Liszt is the full respect with which even his enemies regard his personal merits. He is a man of perverse and eccentric (*verschrobene*) but of noble character, unselfish, and without deceit. His intellectual tendencies are very remarkable; he has a great disposition for speculation, and the researches of the different schools which busy themselves with the solution of the great questions which embrace heaven and earth interest him even more than his art. He was for a long time an enthusiast for the beautiful Saint-Simonian view of the world; then he was lost in the mist of the spiritual, or rather the vapoury, views of Ballanche; now he is carried away by the Republican Catholic doctrines of Lamennais, who has placed the Jacobin cap on the cross! Heaven only knows in what stable he will find his next hobby! Yet this insatiable yearning for light and divine truth (*Gottheit*) is always laudable, for it shows his longing for that which is holy and religious.[1]

That such a restless head, which is irresistibly impelled into the whirl of all the needs and doctrines of the age, which feels the necessity of

[1] Liszt ended by becoming a Roman Catholic *abbé*.—*Translator.*

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concerning itself with all the wants of mankind, and must needs stick its nose into every pot in which God is cooking the future—that Franz Liszt can be no docile piano-player for peaceable state citizens and good-natured dullards (*Schlafmützen*) is quite intelligible—that is evident enough. When he sits down to the piano, after he has stroked the hair from his forehead, and begins to improvise, then he often storms well-nigh too wildly over the ivory keys; then he rings out a wilderness of thoughts as high as heaven, in which here and there the sweetest flowers spread all around their rich perfume, so that one is at once tormented and enraptured, but chiefly tormented.

For I must confess to you, that much as I love Liszt, his music does not produce on my soul pleasant impressions, the more so because I also am a Sunday child, and see ghosts which others only hear; and, as you know, that at every chord which the hand strikes from the piano, the corresponding figure of sound (*Klangfigur*) leaps up in my spirit—in short, the music becomes visible to my inner sight. My very sense still seems to stagger when I recall a concert in which I heard Liszt play. It was given for the unfortunate Italians in the hôtel of that beautiful, noble, and suffering princess who so nobly represents her bodily and spiritual native lands, Italy

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and Heaven. You have doubtless seen her in Paris, that ideal form, which is, however, only the prison in which the holiest angel's soul is confined, but this prison is so beautiful that every one stands amazed, and as if enchanted before it.

Well, it was in a concert for the benefit of the Italian sufferers that I last heard Liszt play during the past winter. I know not what, but I could have sworn that it was variations on themes from the Apocalypse. At first I could not distinctly see the four mystical beasts; I only heard their voices, especially the roar of the lion and the croak (*Krächzen*) of the eagle. But I saw very plainly the ox with the book in his hand. He played the Vale of Jehoshaphat best. There were barriers as at a tournament, and as spectators the races of the world, deadly pale and trembling, just risen from their graves, filled the stupendous space. First Satan galloped into the lists in black harness on a milk-white steed. Death rode slowly behind on the pale horse, and finally Christ appeared in golden armour on his black charger, and he with his lance bore Satan to earth, and then Death, and the audience applauded. A stormy roar of approbation rewarded the brave Liszt, who, wearied, left the piano and bowed to the ladies, while over the lips of the Fairest flitted that melancholy sweet smile which recalls Italy and makes one dream of heaven.

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This concert had a very peculiar interest for the public. You know to satiety from the newspapers what a melancholy misunderstanding exists between Liszt and the Viennese pianist Thalberg, caused by an article written in the *Musical World* by the former against the latter, also what a part lurking enmity and greed for gossip played therein, as much to the disadvantage of the critic as of the criticised. While this scandalous quarrel was at its height, the two heroes of the day resolved to play one after the other in the same concert. Both laid aside their private feelings to aid in a benevolent object, and the public to whom they gave the opportunity to judge of and esteem their peculiar difference by actual comparison, repaid them amply by well-deserved applause.

In truth, one has only to compare the musical character of both to convince himself that it indicates as much mean malignity as narrow-mindedness to praise one at the expense of the other. As regards technical development or skill, they balance one the other, while as regards spiritual or mental character, no greater contrast can be imagined than that of the noble, full of soul, intelligent, calm, genially agreeable German—yes, Austrian Thalberg, and the wild, lightning-flashing, volcanic, heaven-storming Liszt.[1]

[1] I never met Liszt, which I have always regretted, for we had both written books on the Gypsies at a time when there

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The comparison of the two virtuosi is based on an error which once flourished in poetry—that is, in the so-called principle of difficulties overcome. But as it has since been discovered that the metrical form means something very different from merely exhibiting the artist's skill in language (*Sprachkünstlichkeit*), and that beautiful verses are not merely to be admired because the making them cost a great deal of labour, so it may be understood that when a musician can impart by his instrument all that which he or others may have felt and thought, it is all-sufficient, and that all the virtuoso *tours de force*, which only indicate difficulties mastered, shall be regarded as mere rubbish, and banished to

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were very few Romany *ryes*. But I knew Thalberg very well, and was once for a long time at the same hotel with him. He impressed me as a very remarkable man, whom it would be difficult to really understand. He had unmistakably the manner peculiar to many great Germans, which, as I have elsewhere observed, is perceptible in the *maintien* and features of Goethe, Bismarck, and others. He gave the impression, which grew on me, of a man who well knew many things as well as piano-playing. He was dignified but affable. I remember that one day when he or some one remarked that his name was not a common one, I made him laugh by saying that it occurred in two pieces in an old German ballad—

"Ich that am *Berge* stehen
Und schaute in das *Thal'*,
Da hab' ich sie gesehen
Zum allerletzten mal."—*Translator.*

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the realm of jugglery, acrobatic tricks, swallowing of swords, balancing, and egg-dancing. It is enough that the musician have a perfect control of his instrument, that the merely material means shall be entirely lost sight of, and only the soul of music be felt. And since Kalkbrenner carried the art of *playing* to its highest perfection, pianists should not depend much on their technical dexterity. Only folly and malice could speak pedantically of the revolution which Thalberg has produced on his instrument. It was playing him an evil trick when, instead of praising the youthful beauty, tenderness, and fascination of his play, people represented him as a Columbus who had discovered an America on the piano, while others had with weary effort only played round the Cape of Good Hope, when they would refresh the public with musical spices. How Kalkbrenner must have laughed when he heard of the new discovery.

It would be unjust if I did not here mention a pianist who is most celebrated, next to Liszt. It is Chopin, who is not only brilliantly distinguished as a virtuoso by technical perfection, but who is equally as eminent as a composer.[1] He

[1] The following sentence, which was given in the first edition, and dropped from those succeeding, was restored in a note in that of 1876. I have placed it again, as I have others of the kind, in the text.—*Translator.*

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can indeed be shown as an example that it does not content an extraordinary man to rival the first in his calling (*seines Faches*) in mere manual skill. Chopin is not satisfied that his hands, on account of their dexterity, shall be clapped by other hands; he strives for higher laurels; his fingers are but the servants of his soul, and that is applauded by people who hear not only with their ears, but also with their own souls. Chopin is the favourite of that *élite* who seek in music the most exquisite enjoyment of the soul. His fame is of aristocratic kind; he is perfumed with the praise of good society, and is himself as aristocratic as his person.

Chopin was born of French parents in Poland, and was partially educated in Germany. The influences of these three nationalities developed a very remarkable personality, since he has thus appropriated the best which is peculiar to the three nationalities. Poland gave him a chivalric soul and its historical suffering. France bestowed amiability and grace; Germany, a romantic depth of feeling. He received from Nature an elegant, tall, and spare form, with the noblest heart and genius. Yes, we must grant Chopin genius in the fullest sense of the word; he is not merely a virtuoso, he is also a poet; he can bring the poetry which lives in his soul to perception; he is a poet and creator of

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tone,[1] and nothing can equal the pleasure which he causes us when he sits and improvises at the piano. Then he is neither Pole nor Frenchman nor German—he betrays a far higher, nobler origin; we then recognise that he comes from the land of Mozart, Raphael, and of Goethe—his true native land is the dream-realm of poetry. When he sits at the piano and improvises, I feel as if some fellow-countryman (*Landsmann*) from my

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[1] *Tondichter.* *Ton*, signifying tone, sound, accent, tune, melody, &c., occasionally assumes in German a more musical and poetical meaning or association (as in *Tonkunst* or *Tonmeister*) than in English. There is absolutely no reason why we should not use it, or any other word, so as to express as much as its equivalent in German, &c., and we would probably do so but for the timidity of the great and semi-vulgar majority, and the undue respect accorded to petty tyrants of words and style, who, unable to write themselves, devote their small talents to teaching the world how to write and what to avoid, or how *not* to be original. In all of the works of such of these writers as are now great authorities, there is nowhere a recognition of the truth that language is only a material in the hands of man with which he can do just what he pleases, that the *Nibelungenlied* could have been written in Italian had there been the man to do it, and that Shakespeare would have been Shakespeare in any tongue. Language was made for man, not man for language, and it is wonderful that men, with innumerable hindrances and defects in their vehicle for expression, continue to persevere in ancient error. The genius of language is always presented to us as an eternal, inexorable, and utterly unchangeable Jehovah, when it is or should be only a ministering spirit, created, like those of the Cabalists, by the magicians whom they serve.—*Translator.*

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loved home were relating to me the most singular things which had occurred during my absence. Many a time do I feel tempted to interrupt him with the questions: "And how is the beautiful water-fairy who used to bind her silver veil so coquettishly round her green locks? Does the white-bearded sea-god still persecute her with his foolish, faded love? Are our roses still as flamingly proud as ever? Do the trees sing as sweetly in the moonshine as in days of yore?"

Ah! I have lived for a long time now in foreign lands, and it often seems to me that with my fable-fancied home-sickness, I am like the Flying Dutchman and his shipmates, who were long rocked on the cold waves, and yearned, and all in vain, for the quiet quays, tulips, myfrows, clay pipes, and porcelain cups of Holland. "Amsterdam, Amsterdam! when shall we reach Amsterdam again?" they sighed in the storm, while the howling winds hurled them incessantly here and there on the accursed waves of their watery hell. I can well understand the suffering at heart with which the captain of the enchanted ship once said, "If I ever should arrive in Amsterdam, I would rather be there as a stone at a street corner than ever leave the city." Poor Vanderdecken!

I hope, my dearest friend, that these letters

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will find you gay and happy in the rosy light of life, and that it will not happen to me as it did to the Flying Dutchman, whose letters are generally addressed to persons who died long ago, during his absence.

Ah! how many of my loved ones have departed while my ship of life has been driven hither and thither by the evillest storms! I feel giddy and dim of sight, and it seems to me as if the stars in heaven no longer stood still, and were flying here and there in wild, bewildering rings. I close my eyes, and then the maddest dreams seize me with their long arms, and draw me into undreamed-of places and terrible fears. . . . You have no idea, dear friend, how strange, and, as if in wild adventure, how marvellous are the landscapes which I see in vision, and withal what cruel sorrows pain me even in sleep. . . .

Last night I found myself in a vast cathedral. Over all was a dim twilight, save in the upper space, where, through the galleries which rose over the first row of columns, passed the flickering lights of a procession—the red-frocked choir-boys, bearers of immense wax-candles and standards, with crosses, brown monks and priests in many-coloured mass garments following behind. Then the procession went on marvellously and uncannily, as in a fairy tale, on and upwards into the height, climbing and winding round into the

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dome; while I down below flew here and there in the nave, an unhappy wife on my arm. I do not know what it was which terrified us, but we fled in heart-beating fear, seeking to hide ourselves behind the giant pillars; but in vain, and we fled ever in greater dread, because the procession coming down the winding stairs drew nearer and nearer to us. . . .

. . . There was an incomprehensible, melancholy dirge, and what was stranger still, there walked before all a tall, pale, somewhat elderly woman, in whose face were the traces of great beauty, and who advanced to us with measured steps, almost like an opera-dancer. She bore in her hands a wreath of black flowers, which she extended to us with theatrical gestures, while a sincere and terrible suffering was apparent in her great, gleaming, and weeping eyes. . . .

. . . When all at once the scene changed, and instead of a gloomy cathedral, we found ourselves in a landscape where mountains were moving, and took every form and position like human beings; where the trees seemed to burn with leaves of red flame, and burned indeed. For when the mountains, after the maddest caprices, all at once fell flat as the plain, then the trees flamed up and fell into dead ashes. . . . And at last I found myself all alone on a wide, waste plain—under my feet was nought save yellow sand, over

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my head only a sad wan sky. I was all alone. My companion had vanished from my side, and while I anxiously sought her, I found in the sand the statue of a woman, wondrous fair, but with one arm broken away, as in the Venus of Milo, and the marble was in many places sadly weather-worn. I stood some time before it in sorrowful reflection, until at length some one came riding by. And the rider was a great bird, an ostrich, and he, riding on a camel, was a droll sight, and we had a long conversation together, all on art.

"What *is* art?" I asked.

"Ask the great stone Sphynx, which is in the first hall of the Museum of Paris," he replied.

My dear friend, do not laugh at my night's adventures. Or have you a work-day, week-day prejudice against dreams?

To-morrow I leave for Paris. Fare you well![1]

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[1] The conclusion of this letter is a wild yet graceful grotesque, "one-half meaning and two-thirds mystery," suggested to our poet firstly by Chopin and Poland, which led his mind back to his own Schnabelenopski, and thence to the dream in it—an unrivalled *fantasiestück*—which he here reproduces in spirit, though not at all by the letter. And "as centuries speak to centuries far apart, visioned in the mind of the Eternal One," so dream calls to dream and renews itself therein across the wide fields of our waking hours. That art is an inexhaustible *mystery* has been marvellously set forth by Albert Dürer, quite in the spirit of this dream, in his etching of *Malincholia*.—*Translator.*

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GEORGE SAND:

A SUPPLEMENT.

PARIS, *April* 30, 1840.

YESTERDAY evening, after long waiting, or almost two months of delay, by which not only the curiosity, but also the patience, of the public were over-excited, the drama of *Cosima*, by George Sand, was brought out at the Théâtre Français. The heat and crowd were intolerable, as may be supposed, since for several weeks all the notabilities of the capital, or everybody who is distinguished by rank, birth, talent, vice, wealth, in short, by distinction of any kind, took pains to attend this play. The fame of the author is so great that the desire to see or curiosity was wound up to the highest pitch; but there were also other interests and passions involved as well as this desire. We knew beforehand the cabals, the intrigues, the spiteful malice which had conspired against the play and made common cause with the lowest professional envy and jealousy.

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The bold author, who had by his romances so deeply offended the aristocracy and the middle class, was to be made to suffer and expiate publicly on this occasion of producing a drama for his "irreligious and immoral principles;" for, as I wrote to you to-day,[1] the French nobility regards religion as a defence against the approaching horrors of Republicanism, and protects it to enhance its own dignity and keep its own head secure, while the *bourgeoisie* see their own vulgar heads threatened by the anti-matrimonial doctrines of George Sand—that is, threatened by a certain decoration of horns, which a Garde Nationale dreads as much as he desires that of the cross of the Legion d'Honneur.

The author had perfectly understood his[2] precarious position, and avoided in his play everything which could offend the noble knights as regarded religion, the morals of the citizen squires, the policy and marriage of the Legitimists;[3] for this champion of social revolution, who had dared the wildest in his writings, had imposed the tamest limits of moderation on himself, his immediate aim being not to

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[1] *Vide* the previous letter of April 30, 1840 (*Lutetia*).

[2] *Der Autor.* George Sand, although a woman, is here spoken of as a man, in accordance with her masculine *nom de plume.*

[3] French version—"Et des legitimistes du mariage quand même."

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proclaim his principles, but to get a position on the stage. The possibility of his success in this excited great apprehension among certain small folk, to whom all the religious, political, or moral differences to which I refer are of no consequence whatever, but who are all the more moved by the meanest envies, jealousies, and rivalry of a mere spirit of trade. These are the *soi-disant* dramatic authors, who form, as with us in Germany, a class by themselves, and who have nothing to do with real literature, and as little with the distinguished authors who form the glory of the nation. The latter, with a few exceptions, abstain from the theatre, but for different reasons. In Germany they do so with an aristocratic scorn of the stage, while in France they would like with all their hearts to be there admitted, but are repulsed by the dramatic poets already mentioned from the field. And, indeed, one cannot be altogether angry with these wretched little devils for defending themselves as much as possible against the invasion of the great. "What do you want here among us?" they cry. "Stay at home in your literature, and do not crowd us away from our soup-pots! Fame for you and money for us. For you the long articles full of admiration and of praise, the recognition of genius, and of high criticism which takes no notice of us poor rascals. For you the laurel, and for us the roast!

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For you the intoxication of poetry, for us the foam of champagne, which we swig (*schlurfen*) joyfully in the company of *chefs de la claque* and the most respectable ladies. We eat, drink, are applauded, hissed, and forgotten, while you are praised in the *Review of Two Worlds* and are starved up to the sublimest immortality." [1]

In truth, the theatre supplies to such writers a brilliant prosperity; most of them become rich and live in pleasant plenty, while the great authors of France, ruined by Belgian reprints or piracies, as well as the wretched condition of the book-trade, starve in comfortless poverty. What is more natural than that they should often long for the golden fruits which ripen behind the lamps of the stage world, and sometimes stretch out their hands to seize them, as lately happened to Balzac,[2] who atoned so sadly for his wish. As there exists in Germany a secret alliance, offensive and defensive, between the men of mediocre talent who supply the theatres with their works, so we find the same in an even more repulsive form in Paris, where all this evil is concentrated. And here, too, these petty people are so active, so clever, so unwearied in their strife against the

[1] The reference to the *Revue des Deux Mondes* is omitted in the French version.—*Translator.*

[2] French version—"Comme le fit dernièrement mon pauvre ami Balzac à qui cette tentative coûta si cher!"

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great, and especially in that against genius, which is always alone in life, and also somewhat unskilful or inapt—and between us, in confidence, a little too much given to idle dreaming.[1]

Well, then, what was the reception given to the drama of George Sand, the greatest writer whom France has produced since the Revolution of July—that strange and solitary genius who has been appreciated and honoured even by us in Germany? Was it definitely bad or doubtfully good? Honourably confessed, I cannot answer the question. The respect for a great name perhaps neutralised many an evil intent. I expected the worst. All the enemies of the author met in rendezvous in the immense hall of the Théâtre Français, which will contain more than two thousand people. The administration had given the author about one hundred and forty tickets to distribute among his friends, but I believe that owing to feminine fancies very few of these fell into applauding hands. There was actually no organised *claque* whatever; the ordinary chief of this association had offered his service, but was not listened to by the proud author of *Leila*. The so-called Romans,[2] who are accustomed to applaud so valiantly when anything by Scribe or

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[1] *Traumerisch träge*—dreamily lazy, or inefficient.

[2] French version—"Les nobles chevaliers du lustre."

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Ancelot is given, were invisible yesterday evening in the Théâtre Français.[1]

The testimonials of applause, which were frequent and sufficiently enthusiastic, were therefore the more honourable. During the fifth act a few murmurs were heard, and yet this act contains far more dramatic and poetic beauties than those preceding it, in which the effort to avoid all that is repulsive almost results in an uncomfortable timidity.

I will here pass no judgment on the merit of the play. It is enough that the author is George Sand, and that the work will, in a printed form, be submitted to the criticism of all Europe. That is an advantage which great reputations enjoy; they are judged by a jury which is not led astray by a few literary eunuchs, who let their piping voices be heard from the corner of a theatrical pit or a newspaper.

As regards the acting, I regret to say that it was all of the worst. With the exception of the celebrated Madame Dorval, who played yesterday no worse, but certainly not the least better than usual, all the actors displayed a monotonous mediocrity. The hero of the piece, a Monsieur Beauvallet, played, to use a Biblical expression, "like a pig with a gold ring in his nose."

[1] The two following paragraphs are omitted in the French version.

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George Sand seemed to have foreseen how little his drama, despite all the concessions which were made to the caprices of the actors, had to hope from their mimetic aid (*mimischen Leistungen*), and in conversation with a German friend he said in jest, "Voyez-vous, the French are all born comedians, and every one plays in the world his part, more or less brilliantly; but those among my compatriots who have the least talent for the noble dramatic art devote themselves to the theatre and become actors."

I have ere this remarked that public life in France, or the representative system and political life, absorb the best dramatic talents of the French, and that therefore only mediocre talent is to be found in the real theatres. But this is only applicable to men, not to the women, for the French stage is rich in actresses of the highest merit, and the present generation surpasses in this perhaps the last. We admire among them very great or extraordinary talents which have developed themselves so much the more in this field since women, by most unjust legislation and by the usurpation of men, are excluded from all political offices and dignities, and cannot make their capacities available on the boards of the Palais Bourbon or of the Luxembourg. It is only in the public-houses of art and gallantry that they can indulge their

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passion for public manifestation;[1] therefore they become actresses or *lorettes*, or perhaps both together, for here in France the two callings are not so distinct one from the other as with us in Germany, where actors are often people of the best reputation, and not infrequently distinguish themselves by excellent citizen-like conduct. Nor are they driven by public opinion, like pariahs, out of society, and they often find a welcome in the homes of the nobility, in the soirées of tolerant Jewish bankers, and even in some honest irreputable *bourgeois* families. Yet here in France, where so many prejudices have been extirpated, the anathema of the Church is still in force as regards actors; they are still regarded as outcasts; and as human beings always become worse the worse they are treated, actors here, with a few exceptions, are still in their ancient condition of a brilliantly and beautifully dirty gypsydom or Bohemianism. Thalia and Virtue seldom sleep here in the same bed, and even our most famed Melpomene sometimes descends from the buskin to exchange it for the merrily disreputable little slipper of a Philene.[2]

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[1] *Offentlichkeit.* French version—"Où elles puissent donner carrière a l'exubérance de leurs talents mimiques."

[2] French version—"Pour l'exchanger contre les provoquantes mules dont Goethe chaussait la gentille coquine de Philine dans son roman *Wilhelm Meister.*"

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All pretty actresses here have their fixed price, and those who are not *à prix fixé* are indubitably the dearest. Nearly all the young ones are kept by spendthrifts or rich parvenus. On the other hand, the real *femmes entretenues* have the greatest longing to appear on the stage, a desire in which vanity and pecuniary interest combine, since they can there best exhibit their corporeal attractions, be observed by distinguished debauchees, and also be admired by the mass of the public. These persons, who are specially seen playing in the smaller theatres, generally receive no salaries; on the contrary, they pay the manager monthly a certain sum for the privilege of appearing on his stage.

Therefore no one knows exactly here where the actress and the courtesan change their parts, or where comedy ceases and sweet nature begins, and where the five-footed iambus passes into four-footed debauchery.[1] These amphibia of art and vice, these Melusinas of the banks of the Seine, form beyond all doubt the most dangerous body

[1] French version—"Et on la pathétique alexandrine de six pieds se perd dans la débauche quadrupède." There are really two Mercurial serpents in this sentence, one of the alexandrine, "which like a wounded snake drags its slow length along," and another wily little *anguis in herba* in the quadrupedal allusion, for which Heine was indebted to a work which I cannot remember to have ever heard quoted in any pulpit.—*Translator.*

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of *la galante Lutèce*, in which so many charming monsters have their being.

Woe to the inexperienced youth who falls into their nets! Woe also to the man of experience, who well knows that the dear beautiful beast ends in a terrible fish-tail, and yet cannot resist her fascinating sorcery. It may be that it is by the voluptuous stimulus of a secret inner fear, by the fearful fascination of the delightful damnation, the rapturous abyss, that he is the more certainly ruined.

The women here spoken of are not wicked or treacherous; they have indeed usually extraordinarily kind hearts; nor are they so deceitful or avaricious as is generally supposed; they are often the most true-hearted and generous creatures; all of their impure acts are caused by actual pressing want, dire need, and vanity; they are not really any worse than the other daughters of Eve, who from childhood upwards have been protected by prosperity, the careful watch of relations—*la surveillance de leur famille*—or by good fortune, from the first fall, and after deeper falls.

What is characteristic in the *lorette* is a certain mania for *destruction* by which they are possessed, not merely to the detriment of a chance gallant, but to the ruin of the man whom they really love, and most of all to their own.

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This rage for ruining is deeply entwined with a passion, a rage, a madness for rapturous enjoyment, the pleasure of the moment, which leaves no day of rest, thinks of no to-morrow, which ridicules all reflection and scorns every scruple. They tear from their lover his last sou, they inveigle him into pledging and compromising all his future life, merely that they may enjoy the fleeting hour; they drive him into wasting those resources by which they themselves might subsequently have profited; they are often guilty in causing him to be dishonoured; in short, they ruin their lovers in the most horrible hurry, and with fearful thoroughness. Montesquieu has somewhere in his *Esprit des Lois* sought to characterise despotism by comparing despots to those savages who, when they would enjoy the fruit of a tree, grasp the axe, fell the tree, and then sitting down by the trunk, devour their booty in headlong haste. I would make application of this to these ladies. After Shakespeare, who in Cleopatra—whom I once called a *reine entretenue* or "kept queen"—has given us a profoundly deep example of such women, our friend Honoré de Balzac is the one who has sketched them with the greatest skill. He describes them as a natural historian describes any kind of animal, or as a pathologist would a disease, without any moralising aim, without prepossession or pre-

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judice. It certainly never occurred to him to either embellish or to rehabilitate, for either would have been as contrary to art as to morals.

I was about to say that George Sand's method of proceeding is quite different, since this writer has ever before his eyes a determined direction which he (*er*) pursues in all his works, and I was about to say that I do not approve of this tendency; but it just occurs to me, and seasonably, that such remarks would be very inappropriate at a time when all the enemies of the author of *Leila* are making chorus against her (*wider sie*). *Mais que diable allait-elle faire dans cette galère?* Does she not know that any one can buy a penny-whistle for a sou, and that the poorest simpleton is a virtuoso on this instrument? We have seen people many a time and oft who whistled with a Paganini's skill. . . .[1]

[1] What is as contrary to art as to morals in Heine, Balzac, and, since their time, in perhaps a thousand other literary panders to prurient tastes, is the *writing* about such women at all, and the constant effort to depict them as something "so *very* peculiar," the result having been to make them, so to speak, exaggerate themselves after literary models. The *lorette* is just what any woman is anywhere who is very familiar with many very dissipated, selfish, and worldly-minded men, and as such men with much money are more abundant in Paris, the great brothel of Europe, than elsewhere, the *lorette* naturally conforms to them. As these courtesans are mostly very slightly educated, and have nearly all sprung from the *basse bourgeoisie*, who are the most money-loving, griping Christians in the world,

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their avarice is early nature, while everything in what they see of "society" prompts them to ostentation and extravagance. In all of which they are quite like ordinary women anywhere. Neither the comments of Heine nor of Balzac are free from *niaiserie;* they do not seem to have come from cosmopolites, or rather they seem to be *pièces de manufacture*, made for coarse verdant provincials. Why all this disquisition on social evils is associated with George Sand will appear plain to any one who will read what is said of this lady in *The Englishman in Paris* (Leipzig: Heinemann & Balestier), a work which contains much that is very interesting relative to many persons or topics which are mentioned in this series by Heine. The remarks in this chapter suggest indeed a very interesting subject which requires a paper by some critic. It is the fact that a vast number of such writers as Heine and Balzac, in order to obtain characters, to a great degree really manufacture them by describing personal traits much too vividly and with too much colour. In short, they, by *cutting in* too deeply, bring out into *alto relievo* that which is by nature only an outline. It is a peculiar trait of provincials or outsiders to be extremely inquisitive as to the manner of living and thinking of all classes not directly known to them, and to surmise in them marvellous mysteries. Sometimes the class in question *follows* instead of preceding the description. Thus Messrs. Du Maurier and Sir A. Sullivan may be said to have really depicted and sung the æsthetes of the Cimabue Brown set into existence.—*Translator.*

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II.

A LATER NOTICE (1854).

NEWSPAPER articles on the first representation of a drama, especially where much curiosity or interest is excited by the name of a celebrated author, should be written and published as rapidly as possible, lest malicious false judgments or slanderous gossip should gain precedence. There was wanting in the preceding pages that more intimate or personal description of the poet, or rather poetess, who here made her first venture on the stage—a venture which completely failed, so that the brow so accustomed to laurels was this time crowned with very painful thorns. What was wanting in the former letter will now be supplied in this by certain remarks as to the person, or rather the personal appearance, of George Sand, extracted from a monograph written some years ago.[1] They are as follows:—

[1] French version—"Je communiquerai ici quelques remarques sur la personne de George Sand, remarques fugitives et

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"As is very generally known, George Sand is a pseudonym, the *nom de guerre* of a beautiful amazon. What induced her to take this name was by no means a memory of the unfortunate Sand, the murderer of Kotzebue—the only German writer of (good) comedies.[1] Our heroine chose this name because it is the first syllable of Sandeau, who was her lover or *premier cavalière servente*. He was an excellent writer, but he could never make himself as distinguished with all his name as she did with the half of it, which she seized ere she fled laughing away from him.

The real name of George Sand is Aurora Dudevant, as her legitimate husband was called, who, by the way, is not a myth, but a nobleman in the body from the province Berry,[2] and whom I once had the pleasure of beholding with my own eyes. I even saw him by his lately *de facto* divorced wife in her small lodging on the

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perisées, au hasard dans une monographie que j'ai écrite il y a plusieurs années."

[1] I once knew an old German itinerant musician, who with his daughter was to be heard every day for years performing on a certain steamboat between New York and Philadelphia. He was from the same town as Sand, and had known him very well. He described him as a quiet, respectable youth, and the last person on earth whom any one would suppose would become a heroic murderer.—*Translator.*

[2] French version—"Un gentilhomme en chair et os de la province du Berry."

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Quai Voltaire, and that I really did behold him then and there was such a remarkable occurrence, that, as Chamisso says, for it I might have let myself be shown for money. He had an inexpressive Philistine face, and seemed to be neither bad-hearted nor rude, but I readily understood that this damp-cold *every-dailiness*, this porcelain glance, these monotonous Chinese-pagoda movements,[1] might be amusing enough for a commonplace woman, yet become in time insupportable (*sehr unheimlich*) to a woman of deeper soul, and that at last she would be inspired with a terror and horror which could not fail to make her flee from him.[2]

The family name of George Sand is Dupin. She is the daughter of a man of inferior condition,[3] whose mother was the famous but now

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[1] This is not the only place in which Heine confounds a pagoda with an image of Joss or Buddha, an image with a nodding head.—*Translator.*

[2] French version—"Et ne pouvaient manquer de la remplir à la fin d'horreur et d'épouvante, au point de la faire se sauver à tout prix de cet enfer matrimoniale." This is pitched an octave higher than the German. But to judge by all accounts, Aurora would have gaily broke at dawn, or run away early some fine morning from any husband, "or any other man," who ever lived, "after the gloss of novelty had vanished," or he had ceased to be useful to her.—*Translator.*

[3] "Elle est la fille d'un militaire, dont la mère etait la fille naturelle d'une danseuse jadis célèbre . . . lui-même fut un des quarte cents batards qu'avait laisses le Prince Electeur." To

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forgotten danseuse Dupin. This Mademoiselle Dupin was a natural daughter of Marshal Maurice of Saxony, who himself was one of the many hundred bastards left by the Prince Elector August the Strong. The mother of Maurice of Saxony was Aurora von Königsmark, and Aurora Dudevant, who was named after her grandmother, also gave the name Maurice to her son. This son and a daughter named Solange, married to the sculptor Clessinger, are the two only children of George Sand. She was always an admirable mother. I have often been present for hours at the lessons in French which she gave her children, and it is a pity that the whole French Academy could not also have been there, for they would certainly have profited much by it.

George Sand, the great writer,[1] is also a beautiful woman—she is even a very distinguished beauty. Her face, like the genius manifested in her works, is more beautiful than interesting, that which is most interesting is always a graceful or *spirituelle* departure from the type of the beautiful, and the features of George

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which illustrious pedigree may be added the words, "Bon sang ne peut mentir,"—"Blood will tell,"—and George Sand was full-blooded and a thoroughbred.—*Translator.*

[1] French version—"La plus grand écrivain de France." An extravagantly undeserved compliment.—*Translator.*

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Sand have a Greek regularity. Their cut, however, is not of classic severity (*nicht schroff*), and it is softened by a sentimentalism which is spread over them like a veil of sorrow. Her forehead is not high, and her beautiful chestnut-brown hair, parted in the centre, flows down over it to her shoulders. Her eyes are somewhat dull, and their fire has perhaps been drowned in many tears, or else passed into her works, which have thrown firebrands over the world and lighted many a dreary prison-house, but perhaps also inflamed many a quiet temple of innocence to its destruction.[1] The author of *Leila* has calm soft eyes, which remind us neither of Sodom nor Gomorrah. She has neither an emancipated eagle nose nor a witty snubbed one; it is simply an ordinary straight nose. A good-natured smile usually plays about her mouth, yet it is not very attractive; her lower lip, which hangs somewhat, indicates exhausted sensuality. Her chin is full, yet beautifully formed, her shoulders beautiful, even magnificent, as are the arms, and also the hands, which are, like her feet, extremely small. As for the charms of her bosom, other contemporaries may describe them; I here con-

[1] French version—"Repandu leur flammes brulantes par tout l'univers et embrasé tant de têtes de femmes: on les accuse d'avoir causé de terribles incendies."

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fess my incompetence to do so. The general form of her person seems to be too heavy, or at least too short. Only her head bears the stamp of ideality—*le cachet de l'idéal*—it reminds us of the noblest remains of Greek art; and as regards it, one of my friends is right in comparing this beautiful woman to the marble statue of the Venus of Milo, which is placed in the lower hall of the Louvre, but she surpasses it in many respects, as, for example, in being much younger. The physiognomists who declare that the character of a man is most infallibly expressed by his voice would be puzzled to detect the extraordinary depth of feeling in George Sand from hers. For it is flat and dull (*welk*), without ring or chime, and yet soft and agreeable. Yet the natural expression of her conversation gives it a great charm. She has no gift for song; not a trace of it shows itself. George Sand sings at best with the *bravura* of a pretty grisette who has not as yet had her breakfast, or who is otherwise out of tune.

George Sand shines also as little in conversation as by her voice. She has nothing of the sparkling wit—*esprit petillant*—of her French fellow-countrywomen, but also nothing of their chattering. But this taciturnity is caused neither by modesty nor by sympathetic interest in the speech of another. That she speaks in mono-

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syllables is due either to pride, because she does not think it worth while to waste words on you, or out of selfish interest in trying to note your ideas, so that she may work them up some time in her writings. Alfred de Musset once called my attention to the fact that George Sand understands perfectly, out of sheer greed, how to give nothing in conversation and get as much as possible. "And in that she has a great advantage over all the rest of us," said Musset, who, in his capacity of several years' service as *cavalière servente* of the lady, had had the best opportunities to learn her thoroughly.

George Sand never says anything witty, and is indeed one of the unwittiest Frenchwomen.[1] When others speak, she listens with an amiable, and often a strange smile, but the thoughts which she has taken in and worked over go forth from the alembic of her soul in a far more precious form. She is a very highly finished and refined listener, and she willingly takes advice from her friends.

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[1] Our author might here have applied, with some truth and more grace, that which Voltaire said of Gabrielle de Breteuil, Marquise du Chatelet, "De toutes les femmes qui ont illustré la France, c'est celle qui a eu le plus de véritable esprit, et qui a moins affecté le bel esprit." George Sand at least did not affect brilliancy; she had other people to do such work for her. —*Translator.*

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Owing to the very uncanonical or freethinking direction of her mind, she has, as may be supposed, no father-confessor; but as even the most emancipated of women must always have a male guide, a masculine authority, so George Sand has also a literary *directeur de conscience*, the philosophical Capucin, Pierre Leroux. This has an evil influence on her talent, for he leads her into obscure drivelling and half-fledged ideas, instead of yielding to the serene delight of creating brightly-coloured and accurately-designed forms, and to practise art for the sake of art. George Sand had, however, invested our dearly beloved Frederic Chopin with much more secular functions. This great musician and pianist was for a long time her *cavalière servente*. Some time before his death she dismissed him; it is true that of late his office had become a sinecure.[1]

I do not know how it came to pass that my friend Heinrich Laube once attributed to me in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* an assertion to the effect that the great and genial Franz Liszt had, during his residence in Paris, been the lover of George

[1] French version—"George Sand avait investi d'une dignité plus mondaine auprès de sa personne notre bien-aimé ami Frédéric Chopin. Ce grand compositeur et pianiste fut pendant quinze ans son *cavalière servente* le plus féal et le plus chevalresque; quelque temps avant sa mort, il fut remercié pour raisons qui me sont inconnues."

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Sand. I avail myself of this opportunity to do a real service to the good, or rather to the æsthetic, reputation of the lady, by assuring my German fellow-countrymen of Vienna and Prague that it is also one of the vilest slanders, which is there disseminated by one of the wretchedest composers of songs in the most abominable dialect—a nameless creeping insect—to the effect that *he* too has been in the most intimate relation with George Sand. Women have, it is true, often the strangest fancies, and there are even some who eat spiders, but I never heard of one who devoured *punaises*. No, Leila never had a fancy for any such boastful insect; and if she tolerated him at times near her, it was because he was so forward.

Alfred de Musset was for a long time, as I have said, the heart's best friend of George Sand. It was a strange chance that the greatest poet in prose whom the French possess, and the first of their now living poets in verse, or certainly the greatest after Beranger for a long time, linked in burning, passionate love, formed a pair crowned with laurels.[1] George Sand in prose and Alfred

[1] The German Editor states that in the original MS. this paragraph is given as follows:—

"In fact, as George Sand surpasses in prose all other belletristic authors in France, so is Alfred Musset there the greatest *poète lyrique*. After him comes Beranger. Victor Hugo, the

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de Musset in verse surpass indeed the so-much-praised Victor Hugo, who, with his fearfully stiff-necked and almost stupid obstinacy, has made the French, and finally himself, believe that he is the greatest poet in France. Is this really his own fixed idea? Assuredly it is not mine. Strange! the faculty which is most wanting in him is just that which the French most esteem, and which is one of their most charming attributes—I mean taste. And as the French find it in all their other authors, it may be that the utter want of it in Victor Hugo appears to them as originality. But what we miss most, and tolerate least in him, is that which we Germans call nature. He is forced and false (*gemacht, verlogen*), and often in the same verse one half gives the lie to the other. He is through and through cold, just as witches say that the devil is; even in his most passionate outpouring his inspiration is only a phantasm, a calculation without love, or rather he has only love for himself—he is an egoist, or what is far worse, a Hugoist. We see

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third great lyricist, who would fain rival both, is very far behind the two, whose verses are so beautifully distinguished by truth, harmony, and grace. It is indeed generally recognised that Victor Hugo is very deficient as regards these qualities. He wants *taste*, which is so universal among the French that they perhaps regard his want of it as originality; he is wanting in that which we Germans call nature."

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in him more hardness than strength, an impudent brow of iron, and, with all the wealth of imagination and of wit, there is still the clumsiness of a parvenu, or of a savage who makes himself ridiculous by excessive and inappropriate application of gold and jewels; in short, baroque barbarism, screeching dissonance, and horrible deformity. Some one has said of the genius of Victor Hugo, "C'est un beau bossu!" The expression is more deeply significant than those imagine who praise Hugo's excellence.

In saying this, I do not merely allude to the fact that in his romances and dramas his heroes are humpbacked, but that he himself is thus intellectually afflicted and burdened. According to our modern German doctrine, called that of the Identity, it is a law of nature that the inner spiritual *signature* or character of a man corresponds to his external or bodily form. I had this idea in my head when I came to France, and I one day declared to my publisher, Eugène Renduel, who was also publisher for Hugo, that I, according to my preconceived idea, had not found in the latter a man with a hump. "Oh, his deformity is not visible," remarked M. Renduel unreflectingly. "What!" I cried, "is he not then free from it?" "Well, not quite," was the hesitating reply; and then, after much urging, friend Renduel confessed that he one morning

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surprised Victor Hugo just at the instant when the latter was changing his shirt, and observed that one of his hips—I believe it was the right—grew out or protruded owing to malformation (*misswuchsig hervortretend sei*), as among people of whom the vulgar say they have a bump or hump they know not where.[1] The multitude, in their shrewd and natural manner of speaking, call such men half-humpbacks, or cripples who have just missed it,[2] just as they call albinos white negroes. It is remarkable that it was the publisher of the poet from whom that deformity was not concealed. "No one is a hero to his valet," says the proverb, and even the greatest poet will not always seem one to his publisher, the lurking chamberlain of his intellect; they see us too often in our most human *negligé*. At any rate, I was much de-

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[1] *Buckel.* Such a man, short and compact, is in America a *bucket*. There is a German popular song, the refrain of which is "Mit dem Buckel." The word *Buckel* (and *bucken*, to bend, bow, emboss), allied to *buckle* in English, is used to signify curving out or bossing, as in sheet-metal work, the filling of a sail by the wind, or the bending of a stick, *e.g.*—

> "And every yard did buckle up
> Like to a bending bow."
> —*Slaver's Song.*

[2] *Verfehlte Bucklichte, falsche Buckelmenschen.* French—"Des bossus manqués, de faux bossus."—*Translator.*

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lighted and amused (*ergötzte ich mich sehr*) with Renduel's discovery, for it confirmed the principle of my German philosophy that the body is the visible spirit, and that our mental defects reveal themselves in our corporal conformation. I must, however, distinctly defend myself against the erroneous assumption that the contrary must also be the case, that is, that the body of man is always his visible soul, and that every external defect argues an inward vice. No ; we have often found in crippled outward forms the most beautiful and erect souls, which is the more intelligible because bodily deformities are generally the result of a physical cause, and not infrequently that of some neglect or illness after birth. But the deformity of the soul comes with us into the world, and so it happens that the French poet, with and in whom all is false, has also a false hump.

We can make the judgment of the works of George Sand easy and intelligible by saying that they form the most decided contrast to those of Victor Hugo. George Sand has all that is wanting in him ; she has truth, nature, taste, beauty, and enthusiasm, and all these qualities are bound together by the strictest harmony. Her genius has the most beautifully rounded hips, and all that she feels and thinks breathes deep feeling and tenderness (*Tiefsinn und Anmuth*). Her

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style is a revelation of melody and purity of form. As for the material of her descriptions or their subjects, which may not unfrequently be called bad subjects (*mauvais sujéts*), I here abstain from all comment, and leave the subject to her enemies—"à la discussion de ses enemies vertueux et quelque peu jaloux de ses succès immoraux."

These letters on George Sand are of very great interest, not to say value, from a twofold point of view. The personal description of the lady is so accurate and vivid as to suggest a perfect written photograph, while the many scattered remarks as to her intellectual capacities and associates, family, and habits, supply admirable colour to the picture. That Heine, in these papers, shows himself at his best and his worst, brilliant as a writer, and naïvely vulgar and vindictive in attacking an enemy, is also worthy of consideration; for it must never be forgotten that it is as a union of startling incongruities that our author is, if not great, at least peculiar, and far beyond any other of his kind.

But that in which these remarks on George Sand are very valuable is the light which they cast on the strange and mysterious problem as to the degree in which she was an *original* writer. In this Heine is quite unconscious, and reminds us of the eagles in Sinbad's tale, who carried, as they thought, pieces of meat over the mountains, never observing the diamonds which stuck to them. In the first place, I would observe that there is no writer known to me in any literature in whose works there are such marked and absolutely incomprehensible differences as in those of Madame Dudevant, both as regards subject and

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style. Some years ago I saw an exhibition of pictures by a very well-known actress and artist of all kinds, and the conclusion which I drew from it was, that if she had really painted all which bore her name, she had as many finished styles as pictures, and surpassed in versatility, I will not say Horace Vernet, but any other hero of the brush who ever lived. And this exhibition reminded me also of George Sand's works. There are in *Consuelo* not merely passages and pages, but incidents and small or great peculiarities, which unmistakably betray not merely the aid, but the direct work of some Slavonian German, and as decidedly of a *man* at that. It was in 1848–49 that I discovered in one of the most forgotten of old German novels, *Der letzte Taborit* ("The Last of the Taborites"), by Herlossohn, the author of "When the Swallows Homewards Fly," the outlines of the plot of *Consuelo*, with the names of the principal characters, &c. This is, however, a trifle compared to what is infinitely deeper and more incomprehensible in it, and that is the *intimate* knowledge of old forgotten Bohemian or Czech heresies, obscure superstitions, literature, and the like. I was at the time deeply absorbed in studying Bohemian, and I soon found that there had been two authors at work in the book, and that the master-mind was certainly not that of a French woman. But how much was I confirmed in this when I turned to *Indiana* and other works in which there are no indications whatever of the deeply mystical, uncanny, pantheistic heretical spirit nurtured on German metaphysics and *occulta*, which lurks like an awful spirit in *Consuelo* alone. There is perhaps no instance in literature of a mind of this peculiar kind throwing aside its every characteristic, and subsequently writing very shallow sentimental works such as those which are known to be by its *soi-disant* author; and Heine tells us that Madame Dudevant was always on the watch to appropriate every stray idea from

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other people, and was never without a man of intellect to aid her—*i.e.*, to give her ideas, revise her MSS., probably to do everything for her, including writing. It was said of a very distinguished artist for a comic weekly in Paris that he had one man to draw his pictures for him and another to invent the subjects and write the "legends" or accompanying lines. When we study the *vast* differences of style and manner of thought in George Sand's different works, and add to it what Heine tells us, and that her lover, Musset, declared effectively that she surpassed all contemporaries in appropriating the ideas of others, we get certainly a correct idea of her peculiar genius. There are people who, like Heine, will only admire the cleverness which enabled her to use men as mere tools and material, and it is certainly a great art for "success" and notoriety. But it never honestly made a *writer* or a genius, and in these letters Henry Heine, himself an eminent man of letters, declares distinctly that George Sand was at the *head* of all the French writers of prose of later times. I would say, in brief, that the *very* great difference in mere manner of writing, or of literary style, and of mental capacity evident in the works of Madame Dudevant, coupled with what we are told of her habits of appropriating the ideas of others, and of using her lovers, or almost any clever men, as literary sources and aids, renders it almost certain that her *true* literary position, far from being among eminent writers, is simply one of an *editor*, as was, in fact, Dumas the elder, though he really possessed great original talent, which is very doubtful as regards George Sand.

That George Sand employed her friends to work for her occurred to others besides Heine. Thus Ernest Renan tells us in his "Studies in Religious History" (London: Heinemann), that "we must not, however, forget the beautiful romance of *Spiridion*, in which the figure of Joachim de Flor was skilfully drawn and brought into the picture

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with marvellous art. On this point Madame Sand owed much to M. Pierre Leroux." To which it might be added that this book also, as regards style and individual character, differs so much from the author's other works, that one might well believe that it was by another person.

Heine has in many places in his works advocated the theory that genius can commit no theft, and has a right to make any appropriations it pleases, which is the same as declaring that any one who can is justified in stealing an invention. When such a concession is once made, it is found that all who use it abuse it. I once knew a "Bohemian" in New York who could not read the simplest French, yet who was employed by a publisher to translate a very large and important French book. He employed a younger man to do the work, published it with his own name as sole translator, and never paid his assistant a penny of the price promised to him. This was the George Sand-Heine principle logically carried out. The superior "genius" made it all his own—even to the money.—*Translator.*

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LETTERS ON MUSIC FROM PARIS.

1840–1847.

SPONTINI AND MEYERBEER.

PARIS, *June* 12, 1840.

THE Chevalier Spontini is at present bombarding the poor Parisians with lithographed letters in order to make them recall at any cost his long-vanished personality. I have, as I write, before me a circular which he has sent to the editors of all the newspapers, and which none will publish out of respect to human common-sense and Spontini's earlier reputation. In it the ridiculous borders on the sublime.[1] This wretched folly, which expresses, or rather vents, vexation in the wretchedest worn-out style, is as interesting for a physician as for a philologist. The former would here observe the sad phenomenon

[1] Omitted in the French version.

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of vanity blazing and burning in the heart the more furiously, the more the nobler mental powers are extinguished; the latter, or the student of languages, may see what a delightful jargon results when a thorough and unchangeable Italian, who had been compelled to learn a little French in France, has developed this Italian-French by twenty-five years' residence in Berlin, so that the old "canting"[1] is marvellously mixed with Sarmatian barbarisms.

This circular begins with the words:—

"C'est très probablement une bénévole supposition on un souhait amical jeté à loisir dans le camp des nouvellistes de Paris, que l'annonce que je viens de lire dans la 'Gazette d'État de Berlin,' et dans les 'Débats' du 16 courant, que l'administration de l'Académie royale de musique a arrêté de remettre en scène la *Vestale!* ce dont aucuns désirs ni soucis ne m'ont un seul instant occupé après mon dernier départ de Paris!"[2]

As if any one had spoken voluntarily of M. Spontini in the *Staatszeitung* or in the *Débats*,

[1] "Canting," not in the sense of affected pious language, but of the peculiar jargon spoken by thieves and vagabonds. The German word is *Kauderwelsch*, i.e., "gibberish Italian." I had an opportunity only a week ago, as I write, of somewhat talking it with a tinker near Homburg. It is about one half Hebrew. —*Translator.*

[2] This extract from Spontini's circular is omitted in the French version.—*Translator.*

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and as if he had not wearied the whole world with letters to remind them of his opera! The circular is dated in the month of February, but it has been recently sent here again, because Signor Spontini has heard that his famous work is to be reproduced here, which is nothing but a trick—a trick of which he will avail himself to be called here.[1] For after he has declaimed pathetically against his enemies he adds:—

"Et voilà justement le nouveau piège que je crois avoir deviné, et ce qui me fait un impérieux devoir de m'opposer, me trouvant absent, à la remise en scène de mes opéras sur le théâtre de l'Académie royale de Musique, à moins que je ne sois officialement engagé moi-même par l'Administration, sous la garantie du Ministère de l'Intérieur à une rendre à Paris, pour aider de mes conseils créateurs les artistes (la tradition de mes opéra étant perdue), pour assister aux répétitions et contribuer au succès de la *Vestale*, puisque c'est d'elle qu'il s'agit."

This is the only place in these Spontinian marshes[2] where there is firm ground; craft or cunning here sticks out its longish ears—*qui ne sont pas précisement celles du renard.* The man

[1] French version—"Il ne voit qu'un piège dans cette intention—piège dont il veut profiter pour être appelé ici."

[2] An allusion probably to the Pontine marshes.—*Translator.*

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is absolutely determined to leave Berlin, which he can really endure no longer since the operas of Meyerbeer have been given; therefore, about a year ago, he came here for a few weeks, and ran about from morning to midnight among all people of any influence, to manage to be recalled to Paris. As most people here believed that he was dead long ago, they were not a little frightened at his sudden apparition. The slippery intriguing agility and craft of this dead skeleton had in it something fearful and foreboding. M. Duponchel, the director of the Grand Opera, would not receive him at all, and cried in terror, "Dieu me préserve de cette morte intrigante; j'ai déjà assez à souffrir des intrigues des vivants!"

And yet M. Moritz Schlesinger, the publisher of Meyerbeer's operas (for it was through this good honourable soul that the Chevalier Spontini announced his visit to M. Duponchel), had employed all his most trustworthy and persuasive eloquence to put his protégé in the best light. And in choosing this person as his intermediary, Signor Spontini manifested all his shrewdness. He also showed it on other occasions; as, for instance, when he discussed or spoke ill of any one, he generally did this among the most intimate friends of the latter. He told the French writers that at

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Berlin he had caused a German who had written against him to be imprisoned for six months. Among the French lady-singers he complained of the German *cantatrices*, who would not engage themselves at the Berlin opera unless it was expressly stipulated that they need not sing in any opera by him!

But he will positively come here; he can no longer endure a residence in Berlin, whither, as he declares, he was exiled by the hatred of his enemies, yet where he is allowed no peace. He recently wrote to the editor of *La France Musicale* that his enemies were not content with having driven him over the Rhine, over the Weser, over the Elbe; they would fain hunt him farther—over the Weichsel, over the Niemen! He finds great resemblance between his own fate and that of Napoleon. He believes himself to be a genius against whom all the musical powers have conspired. Berlin is his St. Helena, and the critic Rellstab his Hudson Lowe. But now his mortal remains should be borne to Paris and solemnly placed in that musical Dome des Invalides—the Académie Royal de Musique.

The alpha and omega of all the Spontinian complaints is Meyerbeer. When the Chevalier paid me the honour of a visit here in Paris, he was inexhaustible in stories bursting with gall and poison. He cannot deny the fact that the King of Prussia

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has loaded with honours, even to excess, our great Giacomo, and proposes to further bestow on him high office and dignities; but he knows how to attribute all this royal favour to the meanest motives. And he really seems to have ended by believing in his own inventions, for it was with a countenance expressive of the deepest conviction that he assured me that once when dining with His Majesty the King, His Highest Mightiness confessed to him after the meal, with gay and festive frankness, that he would like to keep Meyerbeer at any price in Berlin, so as to prevent the millionaire musician from spending his money in other countries! As music, or the desire to shine as a composer of operas, is a noted weakness of this wealthy man, he, the King, would profit from this weakness by baiting Meyerbeer, the ambitious, with distinctions and dignities. "It is sad," added the King, "that a native talent which possesses such great and almost genial resources (*Vermögen*) should squander his good hard Prussian dollars in Italy and Paris, merely to be celebrated as a composer. What he gets for his money may also be had here; there are laurels growing also in our hot-houses for the fools who will pay for them; our journalists also are intelligent, and like a good breakfast, and especially a good dinner, and our street-corner commissionaires and sellers of pickled cucumbers have

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as hard hands for applauding as the Parisian *claque;* and if our idlers, instead of lounging in smoking-rooms, would pass their evenings in the opera-house applauding the *Huguenots*, they would be more cultured; the lower orders must be morally and æsthetically elevated, and the great thing is to make money come among the people, especially in the capital."

It was in such terms as these, according to Spontini, that His Majesty expressed himself in order to excuse himself to the composer of the *Vestal* for the sacrifices which he had made to Meyerbeer. When I remarked that it was really very praiseworthy in the King to make such sacrifices to advance the prosperity of his capital city, Spontini suddenly interrupted me with, "Oh, you are mistaken; the King of Prussia does not protect that wretched music from politico-economical grounds, but because he hates all music, and knows very well that it must perish under the example and lead of a man who is without any feeling for what is true and noble, and only cares to flatter the rude multitude."

Here I could not refrain from plainly saying to the spiteful Italian that it was not wise of him to deny all merit whatever to his rival. "*Rival!*" he cried in a rage, and changed colour ten times, till finally the yellow reappeared, when all at once, subduing himself, he asked with scornful

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gnashing of the teeth, "And are you really sure that Meyerbeer is actually the composer of all the music which is brought out in his name?" I was not a little startled at this lunatic question, and then I heard with astonishment that Meyerbeer had bought in Italy the compositions of several poor musicians, and manufactured from them operas which failed because the stuff which they sold him was worthless. Afterwards he purchased from a talented abbé in Venice something better, which he incorporated into his *Crociato*. He also possesses Weber's unpublished manuscripts, which he had gammoned (*abgeschwatzt*) the composer's widow into giving him, and which he will probably use at some future time. *Robert le Diable* and the *Huguenots* are chiefly the work of a Frenchman named Gouin, who is only too willing to have them brought out as Meyerbeer's for fear lest he should lose his place as *chef de bureau* in the post-office, because his superiors in the administration would certainly mistrust his zeal if they knew that he is a visionary composer, since such Philistines consider that practical functions are irreconcilable with artistic gifts; therefore, the post-official Gouin is shrewd enough to conceal his authorship, and to leave all worldly renown to his ambitious friend Meyerbeer.

This is the cause of the great intimacy between

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the two men, whose interests are so intimately allied. But a father is always a father, and the fate of his intellectual children is always near to the heart of Gouin; therefore the details of the execution and the results of the performance of *Robert le Diable* and of the *Huguenots* absorb all his activity. He is present at every rehearsal; he is always conferring with the manager of the opera, with the singers, the dancers, the *chef de clague*, the journalists; he runs with his oiled and strapless boots (*Thranstiefeln ohne Lederstrippen*) from morning to evening to every newspaper editor to beg for a puff in favour of the so-called operas of Meyerbeer, and his unweariedness in this amazes everybody.

When Spontini imparted to me this hypothesis, I confessed that it was not devoid of probability, and that, notwithstanding the angular and clumsy exterior, the tile-red face, the low forehead, the greasy black hair of M. Gouin, suggesting a grazier or drover more than a musical composer, there was still much in his conduct which was very suspicious indeed, which rendered it probable that he was really the author of the operas of Meyerbeer. He has often spoken of *Robert le Diable* and of the *Huguenots* as "our operas," and such expressions have escaped him as "We have a rehearsal to-day," "We must cut short an air." And it is very singular too that

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M. Gouin never misses an opera, and when a *bravura* is applauded, he quite forgets himself, and bows to every side as if to thank the public. I admitted all this to the raging Italian, yet added, that though I had seen all this with my own eyes, I could not believe that M. Gouin had really written the *Huguenots* and *Robert le Diable;* but that if such were the case, artistic vanity would be sure in the end to get the upper hand, and that M. Gouin would finally vindicate his right to the authorship of those operas.

"No," replied the Italian, with a gloomy sinister glance as piercing as the point of a stiletto,[1] —No; this Gouin knows too well his Meyerbeer not to be aware that his friend is possessed of terrible means to put aside any one who is dangerous to him. Aye, he would be capable of immuring him for ever in Charenton under the pretence that poor Gouin is insane. He would pay the price of first-class board for such patients, and would go twice a week to Charenton to be sure that his poor friend was carefully watched; and he would give the guardian liberal tips to take good care of his mad Orestes,

[1] What a pity that Heine did not know that *Spontone* (dialect *Spontini*) means in Italian the sting of a wasp or the point of a pike, or, in a way, even a dagger. The *nomen* was indeed an *omen* of the man as described by our author.—*Translator.*

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to whom he would act as another Pylades, to the great edification of all the gaping idiots, who would not fail to praise his generosity. Poor Gouin! should he speak of his fine choruses in *Robert le Diable*, they would put on him a strait-jacket, and if he mentioned his magnificent duet in the *Huguenots*, he would get a shower-bath. And the poor devil might be glad to have got off with his life. All who have ever stood in the way of that ambitious wretch have perished (*müssen weichen*). Where is Weber? Where is Bellini? *Hum! hum!*"[1]

This *hum! hum!* was, despite the shameless malignity which it implied, so droll that I roared with laughter, and remarked—

"But you, *Maestro*, have not yet been cleared out of the way, nor Donizetti, nor Rossini, nor Halevy."

"Hum! hum!" was the reply. "Hum! hum! Halevy does not trouble his *confrère*, and Meyerbeer would willingly pay him something

[1] French version—"Et il pouva encore se féliciter d'avoir conservé la vie et de n'être pas disparu de ce monde, comme tous ceux qui embarrassaient dans son chemin le fameux *jettatore* Meyerbeer." A *jettatore* is one who kills or wounds with the evil-eye, and it is a pity that *Ehrgeizling* has been substituted for it in the German text, as it gives a very strong reason, in the mouth of a superstitious Italian, for the mysterious manner in which he speaks of the deaths of Weber and of Bellini.—*Translator.*

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to exist as a harmless apparent rival; and he knows as regards Rossini, through his spies, that he no longer composes a note; and then Rossini's stomach has already suffered enough as it is. Therefore he never touches a piano for fear of exciting Meyerbeer's suspicions. Hum! hum! But thank God, only our bodies can be killed, not the work of our souls; that will bloom for ever in immortal freshness, while with the death of that Cartouche of music his immortality will also end, and his operas follow him into the silent realm of oblivion."

Truly it was with great pains that I restrained my indignation at hearing the insolent disdain with which this bitterly envious Italian spoke of our great and celebrated master, who is the glory of Germany and the pride of the East, and who unquestionably should be considered and admired as the true composer of *Robert le Diable* and of the *Huguenots*. No, a Gouin certainly never composed anything so magnificent.[1] With all my reverence for this vast genius, I feel serious doubts now and then rise in me as to the immortality of these master-works after the

[1] The French version adds—"Quelque brave homme qu'il soit." There are many such trifling additions or variations in this letter in the French copy, which give the latter the air of having been the original.—*Translator.*

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death of their author, but in my interview with Spontini I assumed the air of being convinced that they would endure for ever; and, to vex the jealous Italian, I informed him in confidence of something by which he could perceive what wondrous foresight Meyerbeer has shown as regards the success of his spiritual children, even beyond the grave. "This prevision," I said, "is a psychological proof that it is not M. Gouin, but the great Giacomo who is the real father. For he has established by his will an entail (*Fideikommis*) or trust in favour of his musical spirit-children, by which he leaves a capital, the interest of which is devoted to ensure the future of the poor orphans, so that even after the death of their father all the necessary expenses for popularity, such as decoration, claque, newspaper puffs, and the like shall be defrayed. Even for the as yet unborn little *Prophet* the tender parent has appropriated the sum of 150,000 Prussian thalers. Never yet did a prophet come into this world with so much money—the carpenter's son of Bethlehem and the camel-driver of Mecca had nothing like it. *Robert le Diable* and the *Huguenots* are less richly endowed; they can perhaps live for a long time to come on their own fat, so long as good scenery and well-shaped ballet-legs are provided; in the remote future they may require some further aid.

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The *Crociato* also receives much less, and his father, who shows himself here a little stingy, complains that this gay young scamp cost him too much money in Italy, and that if not a prodigy, he is at least a prodigal.[1] But Meyerbeer shows himself more nobly generous to his unfortunate fallen and failed daughter *Emma de Rosburgo*, who is to be every year again announced in the *Presse*, and have a new endowment, and appear in an *édition de luxe* of satin velvet; for parents' loving hearts always beat most truly for wretched crippled changelings of children. And in this manner all of Meyerbeer's spiritual children are well provided for; their future is assured unto all time."

Hate blinds even the insect, and it is not to be wondered at that a passionate fool like Spontini never doubted my words. He cried aloud, "Oh! he is capable of any—everything! Wretched age! unfortunate world!"

I here close my letter, for I am to-day in very tragic mood, and gloomy thoughts of death cast their shadows over my soul. To-day my poor Sakoski was buried—Sakoski, the great artist in leather, for the term shoemaker is too trifling for such a man. All the *marchands*

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[1] "Et que si ce n'est un prodige, c'est du moins un prodigue." This is limited to *ein Verschwender* in the German text.

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bottiers and *fabricants de chaussures* in Paris attended his funeral. He was eighty-eight years of age, and died of an indigestion. He lived wisely and happily. He troubled himself very little as to the heads of his contemporaries, but all the more for that as to their feet. May the earth be as light and easy on thee as thy boots have been to me, O Sakoski![1]

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[1] Heine alludes to this man in "The Romantic School" (*vide* "Germany," vol. i. p. 359), where he declares his conviction that "Jacob Böhme did not make such good boots as M. Sakoski . . . nor Sakoski make such excellent verse as Hans Sachs."

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Liszt.

THE MUSICAL SEASON OF 1841.

PARIS, *April* 20, 1841.

THE Exhibition of this year only revealed an incapacity of many colours. One might almost think that the renaissance or blooming anew of the fine arts had by us come to an end, and that it was not a new spring, but a pitiful Old Wives' Summer.[1] Painting, Sculpture, and even Architecture took a joyous flight on high immediately after the Revolution of July; but their wings were only tied on, and the artificial flight was followed by a heavy fall. Only the youngest out of all the sisters, Music, soared with original and vigorous strength. Has she now attained the zenith of her career of light? (*Lichtgipfel*). Will she maintain it, or will she, too, soon sink to earth? These are questions to which perhaps

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[1] *Alteweibersommer.* In America, the Indian summer, in French, *l'été de Saint-Martin*, the brief period of fine weather in autumn, about the time of the first frosts.—*Translator.*

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only a future generation can reply. But it seems probable that our epoch will be specially inscribed in the annals of art as the musical age. The arts keep even pace with the continual, gradual spiritualisation of humanity. In the earliest times, architecture must necessarily come forth alone, tremendously expressing and glorifying the unconscious and rude sense of immensity, as we see it among the Egyptians. We behold later with the Greeks the full development of sculpture, which already indicates a further mastery of matter; the spirit carving in the stone a presentiment of the perceptive soul (*eine ahnende Sinnigkeit*). But the spirit found the stone much too hard for its rapidly rising need of a revelation of itself (*Offenbarungsbedürfnisse*), so it chose colour blended with varied shadow to set forth a transfigured and twilight world of love and pain. Then arose the great period of painting, which burst forth so gloriously at the end of the Middle Age. With the development of life in self-consciousness, all plastic gifts disappear from man, till finally even the sense of colour vanishes, and the sublimed spirituality or abstract thought in action (*Gedankenthum*) grasps at sounds and chords to stammer or babble a visionary sublimity (*lallende Ueberschwänglichkeit*), which is perhaps nothing but the dissolution of the whole corporeal world; so that music is

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perhaps the last utterance of art, as death is the final word of life.[1]

I have begun with this brief observation to explain why the musical season is to me rather a torment than a delight; that one is here almost drowned in mere music; that there is in Paris almost no house in which one can save himself from this resounding Sinner's Flood. That the

[1] These views of Heine, drawn from the *Natur Philosophie*, while they are admirably and clearly expressed, give us only one side of a vast question. If the spiritualisation of man—that is, the development of thought, intellect, or mind—is the cause of the decay of art, why is it that intellect at present, instead of developing grander *motives* or themes as it progresses, always falls back on the past for them? Setting aside sculpture and painting, which now simply exist on reproduction, why is the music of the future founded on the Nibelungen, the Tannhäuser, and similar topics of the olden time, which are actually incomprehensible as regards their ancient meaning and *reality*, and which have no relation whatever to music? If music is advancing beyond the merely emotional stage to thought, or becoming one with it, as so many claim, why does it not create thought or new motives? The truth probably is, that science is progressing to a new phase of material life, entirely free from the old spiritual influences, and that when this shall be independent, there will be a new art and new music based on its results. And as Fichte declares that no bird, however rapidly it flies, can go beyond itself, so is it impossible that any art can advance beyond the limits of this present age of confused transition. It is very remarkable that Heine, who had been formed in spiritual ideas, often had these marvellous intuitions as to the disappearance of ancient art, although he nowhere anticipates that after the twilight of the gods there is to be a new world.—*Translator.*

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noble art of sweet sound inundates all our life, is for me a serious sign, and it often awakens in me a displeasure which deteriorates into the most ill-natured injustice against our great *maestri* and *virtuosi*. Under such circumstances no one can expect from me any too enthusiastic hymn of praise for the man round whom just at present the historical *beau monde*, and especially the hysterical lady-world, is rejoicing with delirious enthusiasm. I speak of Franz Liszt, the genial pianist, whose playing often impresses me like a musical agony in the world of things apparent.[1] Yes, the genial one, or the genius, is again here, and gives concerts which exercise a magic which is well-nigh marvellous. Beside him all pianists vanish—excepting Chopin, the Raphael of the forte-piano. And in truth, with the exception of the latter, all others of the craft, whom we have heard this year in concerts without number, are only piano-players; they shine in the dexterity with which they manipulate the stringed wood; but when Liszt plays, one no longer thinks of mere difficulties subdued, the piano disappears, and music reveals itself. In this respect Liszt has made wonderful progress since I last heard him play. And to this advantage he adds a calm

[1] This reference to agony is omitted in the French version. —*Translator.*

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or self-possession which was formerly awanting. When he, for example, played a storm on the piano, or saw lightnings flit in his own face, his limbs seemed as if shaken by a tempest, and his long locks seemed dripping with rain. But now, when he gives us even the most terrible thunder, he rises far above it, like the traveller who stands on the summit of an Alp while a tempest rages in the valley far below; the clouds gather and lie deeply under him, lightnings curl like serpents at his feet, while he raises his head smiling in the pure ether.[1]

Despite his geniality, Liszt encounters opposition here in Paris, which is perhaps the result of it or of genius. This quality is in certain eyes a tremendous transgression, which can never be sufficiently punished. "Talent may be in time forgiven, but genius never," as was once said by the late Lord Byron, between whom and Liszt there is a great similarity. This opposition consists mostly of serious musicians, who give the laurel to his rival, Thalberg the imperial. Liszt has already given two concerts, in which he, contrary to all precedent, played without the co-operation of other artists. He is now pre-

[1] "Eternal sunshine settles on its head." Seven lines of the beginning of the next sentence were omitted in the earlier editions and are given in a note in the latest.—*Translator.*

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paring a third for the benefit of the monument to Beethoven. This composer must indeed correspond most closely to the taste of a Liszt; for Beethoven carries spiritual art to that melodious agony of all which is perceptible (*Erscheinungswelt*), or unto that annihilation of nature which fills me with an awe which I cannot conceal, although my friends shake their heads at me. It is to me a deeply, marvellously significant thing that Beethoven became deaf towards the end of his days, so that even the invisible world of sounds had no longer a ringing reality. The sounds which still existed in his soul were only memories of music long dead and gone, the ghosts of vanished airs, and his last works bear on their brows a strange stamp of death.

I was impressed less terribly than by this music of Beethoven by his friend, "L'ami de Beethoven," as he shows himself to all Paris—I believe even on his visiting cards. He is a long hop-pole with a terribly white cravat and a dreadfully bitter undertaker's-assistant's face. Was this "friend of Beethoven" really his Pylades, or did he merely belong to the throng of those indifferent acquaintances with whom a man of genius often keeps company, all the more willingly the more insignificant they are and the more stupid their twaddle, because it affords him relief after wearisome poetic flights. At any rate, we saw in

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this a new way to turn genius to account, and the small newspapers were not a little merry over "l'ami de Beethoven." "Comment l'éminent artiste a-t-il pu supporter un ami si peu amusant et si pauvre d'esprit?"—("How the devil could such a man put up with such a bore?")—cried the French, who lost all patience listening to the monotonous humdrum of the tiresome guest. They forgot that Beethoven was deaf.[1]

The number of artists who have given concerts during this year's season has been legion, and there was no want of mediocre pianists who were praised as if they had been miracles in the newspapers. They are mostly young people, who, either in their own modest persons or in that of modest brothers, solicit such laudation and elevation in the press. The self-deifications of this kind, and the so-called puffs (*Reklame*) form delightful reading. Such a *réclame* which appeared lately in the *Musical Gazette* announced from Marseilles that the celebrated Döhler[2] had there enchanted all hearts, especially by his interesting paleness, which—the result of a recent illness—

[1] The reader will find anon that this was all untrue, and that the man referred to did not have "the friend of Beethoven" inscribed on his cards, as Heine was compelled to admit.—*Translator.*

[2] *Dohle* or *Döhle* means in German a jackdaw. I believe that this is the only instance in Heine's works of his omitting to make a joke, good or bad, when it came in his way.

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had attracted the attention of the *beau monde.* "The celebrated Döhler" has since then returned to Paris and given several concerts,[1] including playing at that of the *Gazette Musicale* of M. Schlesinger, who rewarded him therefor with wreaths of laurel in the most liberal manner. *La France Musicale* also praises him, and with equal impartiality, for this journal has a blind hatred of Liszt, and so in order to sting the lion it praises the puppy. But what does the merit of the celebrated Döhler amount to? Some say that he is the last among the second-rate pianists, while others declare him to be the first of the third-rate! He really plays prettily, nicely, and neatly, and his execution is most charming, indicating an astonishing facility of fingering, but not a trace of vigour or intellect. He is summed up in graceful weakness, elegant impotence, interesting paleness.[2]

Among the concerts of this year which still resound in the memories of all lovers of art were

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[1] Twelve lines are here omitted in the French version.—*Translator.*

[2] It is worth observing that Heine subsequently, in "The Musical Season of 1844," spoke of Döhler as the *greatest* among the lesser or second-class artists, and altogether indicates that he has a higher opinion of him than is here expressed. But our author's deepest convictions, whether in religion or art, but especially as to human beings, depended entirely, as he several times naïvely admits, on the mood or state of health in which he

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the *matinées* which were given by the publishers of the two musical journals here to their subscribers. *La France Musicale,* edited by the brothers Escudier, two amiable, sensible, and artistically gifted young men,[1] shone in its concerts by the co-operation of the Italian singers and of the violinist Vieuxtemps, who is regarded as one of the lions of the musical season. Whether there is a real king of the beasts under the shaggy coat of this lion, or only a little ass,[2] I will not take it on me to decide. To tell the honest truth, I cannot agree with the extravagant laudations which are lavished on him, for it does not seem to me as if he had climbed so very high on the ladder of art. Vieuxtemps is about at the middle of that ladder on whose summit we once beheld Paganini, and on whose very lowest round is our admirable Sina, the celebrated bathing-guest of Boulogne, and the owner of an autograph of Beethoven. But it may be that M.

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found himself when laying down the laws of eternal truth in criticism. Like the students described in *Schnabelewopski,* he was, when hungry and ill-tempered, a grim atheist before the soup, and a smiling Christian after the dessert. *Semper mutat vultum.*

[1] This compliment to the brothers is omitted in the French version.

[2] *Grauchen.* French *grison,* literally "a small grey." The twelve lines following this word are omitted in the French version.

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Vieuxtemps is much nearer to M. Sina than he is to Nicolo Paganini.

Vieuxtemps is a son of Belgium, and in fact the most remarkable violinists seem to come from the Low Countries. For the violin is there the national instrument, which has been cultivated by great and small, by women as well as men, from all time, as we may see by the Dutch pictures. The most distinguished violinist of this national paternity (*Landsmannschaft*) is beyond question Beriot, husband of the late Malibran, and many a time I cannot but believe as if the soul of his departed wife sang in the sweet notes of his violin.[1] It is only Ernst the Bohemian, so rich in poetry, who can draw from his instrument sad sounds so sweet while bleeding.

Artôt is a fellow-countryman of Beriot; he is also as distinguished a violinist, but one whose play never suggests a soul; a well-dressed, neatly-turned fellow—*un garçon fait a tour et tiré à quatre épingles*—whose execution is as smooth and brilliant as a japanned table-cover. Haumann,

[1] An idea taken from the story told of Paganini (*vide* Heine's "Florentine Nights," p. 29, 1891), but it is here greatly refined and beautified. It is probably an old Italian conception. I have a beautiful poem which I heard sang by a Romagnola fortune-teller on the subject of a witch whose soul passed into a guitar, and which, when played on a hundred years later by her sorcerer-lover, gave with terrible effect the *tarantella* or dance of the witches, &c.—*Translator.*

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the brother of the Brussels pirate-printer,[1] carries on with the violin the business of his brother; what he plays are clearly counterfeits of the most distinguished fiddlers, the texts being margined here and there with superfluous original notes, and enlarged with brilliant typographical errors.

The brothers Franco-Mendez, who also gave this year concerts in which they showed their skill as violinists, also came from the land of the *treckschuit* and *Quispeldorchen*. This is also the case with Batta the violoncellist, who is a native Hollander, but who came while young to Paris, where he greatly delighted many—especially ladies—by his boylike youthfulness. He was a dear little boy, and made his instrument[2] weep like a child. And though he in the interim has become a lusty young fellow, he cannot leave off this habit of weeping and whimpering, and lately, when he could not appear in public owing to illness, it was generally reported that owing

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[1] *Nachdrucker*, a reprinter, here especially applied to Belgian publishers, who carried on to an immense extent the infamous business of reproducing foreign works without remunerating the authors.—*Translator.*

[2] "*Bratsche*, bass-viol, from the Italian *braccio*, an arm, Latin *brachium*" (Whitney). More probably from a provincial word, *bratsch* or *brat-pfanne*, a frying-pan, from the resemblance in form. In one of Breughel's pictures a devil is thus represented as fiddling on a frying-pan.—*Translator.*

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to his childlike wailing on the violoncello he had brought a real baby's malady on himself—that is, the measles.[1] But he seems to be quite recovered, and the newspapers announce that the distinguished Batta is preparing for next Thursday a musical *matinée* which will fully recompense the public for having been so long deprived of its favourite.

The last concert which M. Moritz Schlesinger gave to the subscribers of his *Musical Gazette*, and which, as I have said, was regarded as one of the most brilliant incidents of the season, was for us Germans of special interest. Therefore the whole *Landsmannschaft* or National Association was present, anxious to hear Miss Löwe, the celebrated singer, who gave in German the beautiful *Adelaide* of Beethoven. The Italians and M. Vieuxtemps, who had promised their co-operation at this performance, announced, after it had begun, that they would take no part in it, to the utter consternation of the giver of the *fête*, who, with his usual dignity, came before the audience and explained that M. Vieuxtemps would not play because he considered the building and the audience as beneath him! The insolence of this

[1] Supposed to be caused or aggravated by excessive weeping and crying. *Maser*, a speck or spot, suggestive of a tear, also measles. *Maser-birke* is the weeping birch; *maser-holz*, a speckled or spotted wood; whence *mazer*, bowl, old English.—*Translator.*

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fiddler merits the severest censure. The place in question was the Salle de Musard, where only during the Carnival a mere bit of *cancan* is danced, yet in which, during the rest of the year, the best music of Mozart, Giacomo Meyerbeer, and Beethoven is given. In case of need, one may pardon the Italian singers, Rubini and Lablache, their whims, and suffer nightingales to declare that they will only sing before a public of golden pheasants and eagles; but Mynheer Vieuxtemps, the Flemish stork, should not be so particularly delicate in his choice, and despise a society in which were the most respectable of poultry, such as peacocks and guinea-fowls,[1] in great numbers, and among them some of the most distinguished German jail-birds and dunghill-cocks.[2] But what kind of a success had Mademoiselle Löwe? I will tell the whole briefly. She sang admirably, pleased all the Germans, and completely failed with the French.

As for this last misfortune, I would assure this admirable singer, for her consolation, that it was her merits or excellences which stood in

[1] Called in German, rather prettily, pearl-hens—*Perlhühner*, from the white spots on them.—*Translator.*

[2] *Schnapphähne und Mistfinken.* A *schnapphahn*, literally *snap-cock*, is a highwayman, thief, thief-catcher, or rogue, and *mistfink*, or dunghill-finch, refers also to *mistel-drossel*, the mistel-thrush. In this last word the derivation may be from *mistel*, the mistletoe.—*Translator.*

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the way of a French success.[1] The *Adelaide* of Beethoven does not suit this public. There is in the voice of Mademoiselle Löwe a German soul, a silent being which has as yet revealed itself to very few Frenchmen, and which only finds its way very gradually into France. Had Mademoiselle Löwe come a few tens of years later, she would perhaps have met with a more cordial reception. But to the present time the mass of the people are the same as ever. The French have "spirit," or wit, and passion, and they enjoy both in a restless, stormy, fragmentary, exciting form. This they found altogether wanting in the German singer who gave them *Adelaide*. This calm sighing forth of a soul, these blue-eyed, yearning tones of forest solitude, these warbled lime-tree blossoms with added moonlight, this dying away in more than earthly desire, this arch-German song, found no echo in the French heart, and was, moreover, ridiculed as sentimentalism from over the Rhine. In any case, Mademoiselle Levy was badly advised in the choice of what she sang. And, strangely enough, an unlucky star shed its influence over all the

[1] With the exception of the single sentence beginning with "These tranquil sighs," all is here omitted in the French version to the words "Although Mademoiselle Löwe." "L'Adelaide de Beethoven ne va pas à ce public," is however only in the French edition.—*Translator.*

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débuts in the Schlesinger concerts. Many young artists can sing a sad song, as to that. This was most unfortunately the case with poor Ignaz Moscheles, who came to Paris a year ago to renew his reputation, which had become somewhat faded by mercantile mismangement. He played in one of the Schlesinger concerts and failed lamentably.

Although Mademoiselle Löwe did not succeed here, everything possible was done to secure for her an engagement at the Académie Royale de Musique. The name of Meyerbeer was on this occasion brought before the public more persistently than was probably agreeable to the honoured master. Is it true that Meyerbeer would not allow his new opera to be brought out unless Mademoiselle Löwe should be engaged? Did he really subject the fulfilment of the wishes of the public to such a petty condition? Is he actually so over-modest as to suppose that the success of his new work depends on the more or less supple organ of a *prima donna*?[1]

[1] It will be remembered that Heine in the previous letter declared very decidedly that Meyerbeer did consider the merest trifles as matters of life and death to his operas. What follows from this period to the words "The numerous worshippers," &c., formed the conclusion to this letter in the original in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. It was omitted from the earlier editions, and is restored in the later in a footnote. It is, of course, not in the French versions.—*Translator*.

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Well-informed people, however, assure me that Meyerbeer is quite innocent as regards the delay of his new opera, and the authority of his name is sometimes turned to account to advance the interests of others. He has placed his finished work at the disposal of the Académie Royale de Musique without making any selected conditions.

Although, as I have above remarked, the deepest virtue of German songs, its sweet secretness, is as yet utterly hidden from the French, it still cannot be questioned that German music is beginning to be very well received, if it does not indeed take the upper-hand. Is this the yearning of Undine for a soul? Will the beautiful child be the happier for having one? As to that we will not decide; we will only cite a fact, which perhaps affords an explanation of the extraordinary popularity of the great master who created *Robert le Diable* and the *Huguenots*, and whose third opera, *Le Prophète*, is awaited with a feverish impatience, with a beating of the heart of which one can form no idea. Let no one smile when I declare that also in music, and not in literature alone, there is something which unites and harmonises (*vermittelt*) nations; and music by its universal speech is better adapted than any other art to form a universal republic.

A Frenchman said to me of late that it was by Meyerbeer's operas that he was initiated to

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Goethe's poetry, and that it had opened to him the gates of our great poet's song. There is deep meaning in this declaration, and it suggests to me the thought that German music may indeed have the mission to serve as a prelude or *ouverture* to the comprehension of our German literature.

The numerous worshippers and admirers of the truly admirable master see with sorrow how the illustrious man wearies himself beyond belief with every new production of his genius as to the certainty of its success, wasting all his best powers on the pettiest details. His delicate and weakly constitution naturally suffers from this, and, with his chronic malady of the abdomen, he is often also a sufferer from the prevalent cholera-morbus (*Cholerine*). The musical honey which trickles from his musical masterpieces and refreshes us, costs the master himself the most terrible bodily suffering. When I last saw him, I was terrified at his wretched appearance. At the sight, I thought of the god or demon of the diarrhœa of Tartar legends, in which it is told with horrible drollness that this tormentor of the bowels and literal *caca-dæmon* once bought at the fair of Kasan six thousand pots for his own use, so that the potter became rich. May heaven grant our highly honoured master better health, and may he never forget that his thread of life is very much relaxed (*schlapp, i.e, schlaff*), and

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that the shears of fate are quick and keen. May he never forget what high interests are closely connected with his self-preservation. What would come of his fame should he himself, the great, celebrated master—which may heaven long avert! —be suddenly torn away by death from the scene of his triumphs? Would the family continue to maintain this fame, of which all Germany is so proud?[1] Certainly material means or money would not be wanting to the family, but intellectual resources probably would. Only the great Giacomo himself, who is not only the general musical director of all royal Prussian musical institutes, but also the choir-leader of the Meyerbeerian glory, can direct its immense orchestra. He nods, and all the trombones of the great journals sound *unisono;* he winks, and all the violins of praise begin to fiddle as if for a wager; he lays his finger on the left side of his nose, and all the feuilleton flageolets flute their sweetest flatteries; and there are also unheard-of antediluvian wind instruments, trumpets of Jericho, and æolian harps not yet invented, stringed instruments of the future, the application of which indicates the most extraordinary and tremendous talent for instrumentation. . . .

[1] French version—"Dont s'energueillit le peuple allemande en général et M. Maurice Schlesinger en particulier?"

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Yes; no composer ever understood to so high a degree as our Meyerbeer instrumentation—that is, the art of using all kinds of men as instruments, the small as well as the great, and to enchant forth by their simultaneous action an agreement in public opinion which borders on the incredible. No other musician ever knew how to do this before him. While the best operas of Mozart and of Rossini fell dead at their first representation, and years passed before they were really appreciated, the masterpieces of our noble Meyerbeer enjoy at their first performance a stupendous success, and on the morrow all the newspapers in chorus publish panegyrics and prize articles. But this is all the result of harmonious instrumentation. In melody Meyerbeer is inferior to both the masters before mentioned, but he soars above them in instrumentation. Heaven knows that he often uses for this the most contemptible instruments;[1] but perhaps it is just the reason why he produces such great effects on the great multitude, which admires, worships, honours, and even respects him. Who can prove the contrary? Laurel crowns fly towards him from every side; he wears a forest of them on his head; he knows not where to lay

[1] In the French version this is rather more strongly expressed :—"Il se sert souvent des instruments les plus abjects, les plus ignobles, les plus puants."

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them, and pants under the green burden. He ought to get a little donkey, who could, trotting after him, bear the heavy burden. But Gouin is jealous, and will not endure that he should be accompanied by another.

I cannot here refrain from relating a *bon-mot* which is attributed to the musician Ferdinand Hiller. When some one asked him recently what he thought of Meyerbeer's operas, Hiller evaded the question by saying, as if vexed, "Ah! do not let us talk politics!"[1]

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[1] Heine should here have explained the point of this rather heavy *geistreiches Wort*. It appears from a passage in "France," or in the letter of March 25, 1832, that, as Heine declares, more people were attracted to hear *Robert le Diable* by the political meaning which was popularly attached to the plot than by the music. This was even discussed in the Chamber of Deputies. It may be noted that Heine informs us that Meyerbeer was a millionaire, that he spared no expense or pains to convert to his interests even the smallest hangers-on of newspapers, and finally, that "nothing was too abject, ignoble, or filthy for him to use." If there was the least truth in this, it would fully account for the success of his "first nights" and fame in the newspapers of the next day.—*Translator.*

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THE CARNIVAL IN PARIS.

PARIS, *February* 7, 1842.

"WE are dancing here on a volcano"—but we dance. What ferments, boils, and roars in it, we will not inquire into to-day, and the dancing over it all shall be the only subject of our reflections. Therefore we must speak of the Académie Royale de Musique, where there still exists that honourable *corps de ballet* which has faithfully preserved the choreographic traditions, and which may be regarded as the peerage of the dance. Like that other which dwells in the Luxembourg, this one has also among its members many old wigs and mummies, of which I, from reasonable fear, will say nothing. The ill fate of M. Perré, the manager of the *Siècle*, who has lately been condemned to six months' imprisonment and a fine of 10,000 francs, has sharpened my wits. I will only speak of Carlotta Grisi, who shines marvellously lovely in the respectable assembly of the Rue Lepelletier like an orange among potatoes. Next after (*nächst dem*) the admirable subject which was taken from the

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works of a German author, it was principally Carlotta Grisi who gave an unparalleled success to the ballet the *Willi.*[1] But how delightfully she dances! Seeing her, one forgets that Taglioni is in Russia and Elsler in America. Yes, one forgets America, Russia, and the whole world, and soars with her on high to the enchanted hanging gardens of that fairyland where she rules as queen. Yes, she has all the character of those elementary spirits whom we always imagine as dancing, and of whose dancing measures and airs the people have such marvellous histories. In the legend of the Willis, that mysterious, maddening, and often mortal mania for dancing, which is peculiar to the elementary spirits, is attributed to dead brides, and so to the antique heathen, wild, and wanton delirium of the nixies and elves there was joined the melancholy voluptuous terrors and the strange sweet horror of the mediæval faith in human spectres.

[1] It was given in Paris as *Les Willis*, and so Heine spells it in "The Florentine Nights" (*vide F. N.*, p. 70), where he claims it as German. The *vila* is, however, purely Slavonian. In the French version we find that "c'est *surtout* Carlotta Grisi qui causa le succès inouï du ballet." The order is changed to suit the French or German reader! This mania, madness, or delirium of dancing was *not* at all regarded as "peculiar to elementary spirits" by such old writers as especially discussed it (*i.e.*, Delamere and Johannes Prætorius), but rather to witches. The reader will find the subject fully discussed in my "Etruscan, Roman Remains," p. 154.—*Translator.*

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Does the music correspond to the oddly-wonderful subject of the ballet? Was M. Adam, who supplied the music, capable of composing dancing airs, which, as the popular legend narrated, could compel the trees of the forest to leap and the waterfall to stand still? M. Adam was, I believe, in Norway, but I doubt whether any sorcerer learned in runes ever taught him that *Strömkarl* melody on which only ten variations could be played, for there was an eleventh which could cause tremendous disaster, since, if it were once heard, all Nature would be in an uproar; the hills and rocks would begin to dance, and the houses with them, while within tables and chairs whirled round together, the grandsire waltzed wildly with the grandmother, the dog with the cat, even the babe leaped from the cradle and danced. No; M. Adam did not bring such wondrous melodies from his northern tour; yet what he gives is worthy of renown, and he maintains a distinguished place among the musical composers of the French school.

I cannot refrain from mentioning here that the Christian Church, which took to her bosom and profited by all the arts, could do nothing with dancing, and so repudiated and condemned it. It recalled too vividly the ancient heathen rites in the temples, whether Roman, Germanic, or Celtic, whose deities all passed into those

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elvish beings to whom popular tradition, as I have said, attributed a wonderful love of dancing. Moreover, the Evil One was eventually believed to be the true patron of this pleasure, and it was in his iniquitous society that the witches and sorcerers danced their nightly rounds.[1]

"Dancing is accursed," says a pious Breton song, "since the daughter of Herodias danced before the cruel king who had John the Baptist beheaded to please her. When thou seest dancing," adds the singer, "think of the bloody head of the Baptist on the charger, and then the hellish desire will have no power on thy soul." When we reflect more deeply on the dance in the Académie Royale de Musique, it appears as an

[1] It is curious to observe how this purely Roman Catholic idea, based entirely on a belief in witchcraft and goblins, passed over, with several worse superstitions, to the Protestants, especially to the most strictly pious among the latter. Thus there has ever been in Switzerland, Scotland, and in Puritanical New England a persuasion that dancing is *in itself*, and not merely by association, wicked; to which may be added the belief that instrumental music, especially in churches, was wrong. It is narrated that not long before the civil war, a rustic, who had never before quitted his orthodox rural home, found himself by chance one morning in St. Louis before the open door of a church, while all at once from within pealed forth the sound of the organ. "Walk in and take a seat," said the sexton to the stranger. But the latter, backing out suspiciously, replied, "No you don't, Mister! I'm opposed to all such goins-on of a Sunday, and I'd have you to know that, as a Christian, *I don't dance.*"—*Translator.*

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attempt to christianise to a certain degree this arch-heathen art, and the French ballet has an odour as of the Gallican Church, if not of Jansenism, as have all the artistic productions of the great age of Louis XIV. The French ballet is, in this respect, naturally allied to the tragedies of Racine and the gardens of Le Nôtre. There prevails in all the same regular cut, the same measure of etiquette, the same court-like coldness, the same ornamental prudishness, the same chastity. In reality, its outer form and inner life *is* chaste, but the eyes of the dancing girls form a very lascivious commentary on the most moral *pas* or figures, and their indecent smiles are in sad contrast with their feet. We find the contrary in national dances,[1] which I prefer a thousand times to the ballets of the great opera. These national dances are often too sensual in form—as, for example, the Indian—but the holy gravity on the faces of the dancers *moralises* the dance and raises it to religion (*zum Kultus*). The great Vestris once uttered a saying which caused much laughter in its time. Once he said in his pathetic tone to one of his disciples, "*Un grand danseur doit être vertueux*,"—a great dancer should be virtuous.

[1] "Bei den sogennanten Nationaltänzen,"—"by the *so-called* national dances."—*Translator.*

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Strangely enough, the great Vestris has now lain forty years in his grave (he could not survive the misfortunes of the House of Bourbon, with which the family of Vestris had ever been intimately allied), and it was only in the last December, when I was present at the opening of the Chamber of Deputies, and dreamily abandoning myself to my thoughts, that all at once the late Vestris came into my mind, and as if by inspiration I suddenly grasped the profound meaning of his words, "A great dancer should be virtuous."[1]

I can write but little of the balls in society for this season, having thus far honoured very few soirées with my presence. The everlasting sameness has for some time bored me, and I really cannot understand how a man can long endure it. As for women, it is intelligible enough. For them, such dress and decoration as they can display is the most important thing. The preparations for the ball, the choosing dresses, dressing itself, the preparation of the hair, the practising of smiles and graces before the looking-glass—in short, tinsel finery and coquetry are the chief business and contribute most of the

[1] There appears to be something omitted here in both the German and French texts.—*Translator.*

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pleasure.[1] But for us men, who only don democratic black evening-coats and shoes—those dreadful shoes!—for us a soirée is only an exhaustless source of ennui, intermingled with a few glasses of orgeat (*Mandelmilch*) and raspberry syrup. Of the charming music I will say nothing.[2] What makes the balls of the fashionable world more wearisome than they have any right to be, according to the laws of God and man, is the prevalent mode of only seeming to dance, that the figures are only executed while walking, and that the feet are only moved in an indifferent and almost dull or sulky manner. No one cares to amuse the other, and this egoism shows itself even in the dances of the society of to-day. The lower classes, despite whatever pleasure they find in aping the fashionable world, have not as yet been able to

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[1] Our author here touches on a subject to which an interesting essay might be devoted, on the remarkable degree to which most of the amusements of society have gradually come to be chiefly opportunities for women to display themselves and to criticise one another. In the ball-room, opera, concert, or church, men have little by little effaced themselves into subordinate creatures, all dressed alike, not even noticed by the reporters for the press of the "festivity."—*Translator.*

[2] In the first letter to the *Allgemeine Zeitung* our author, however, said, "The music here consists of old played-out motives from Rossini and Meyerbeer, the two silent masters, who are more in demand in Paris this winter than ever—not in the interests of art, but in those of Messrs. Troupenas and Schlesinger."—*Translator.*

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take up with this selfish, sham dancing; theirs has still life and reality in it, though, unfortunately, of a very lamentable kind.[1] I hardly know how I can express the peculiar misery and melancholy which seizes me when I see the dancing multitude in public places of amusement, especially during the Carnival. Their screeching, shrill, and extravagant music accompanies a dance which touches on the *cancan*. Here I am asked, "What is the *cancan?*" Holy heaven! I am to give a definition of the *cancan* for the *Allgemeine Zeitung!* Well, the *cancan* is a dance which is never danced in respectable society, but in common dance-houses, where he or she who dances it is promptly seized by a policeman and led out of doors. I do not know whether this definition is sufficiently explanatory, but it is not at all necessary that any one in Germany should know what the French *cancan* is.[2] This much may be inferred from

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[1] French version—"Une realité trop décolleté." Which is much better than the German text.—*Translator.*

[2] This is simply no definition at all. The *cancan* is a quadrille with any *obligato* variations or improvisations which any dancer may see fit to introduce. It is not, and never was, as Heine hints, and as the foreign world was led to believe, a special or peculiar set of indecent, voluptuous, or immoral figures, though the latter were often introduced *ad libitum*, according to the character of the performers and the company assembled. There was, naturally enough, a disposition among wild and reckless youth

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that definition, which is, that the virtue recommended by the late Vestris is not here a needful requisite, and that the French people are very much incommoded by the police even while dancing. Yes, this last is a singular abuse, and every reflecting stranger must wonder that in public dancing-halls by every quadrille there are several agents of police or municipal guards, who watch the morality of the performers with dark and Cato-like countenances. It is hardly intelligible how the people, under such shameful control, preserve their laughing cheerfulness and love of dancing. But Gallic frivolity or *la légèreté française* cuts its most joyous capers when in a strait-jacket; and although the stern eye of the police hinders the *cancan* from being capered in all its cynic accuracy, the dancers still know perfectly well how to express by all kinds of ironical *entrechats* and exaggerated gestures of modesty their forbidden thoughts, and the sensuality thus veiled appears more indecent than nudity itself. In

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to whoop and gossip (*cancanner*) while dancing quadrilles, and to this was added extravagant imitations of the *pas seul* opera-dancers, lifting the feet even to the kicking off of men's hats, rocking the body in different ways while advancing, the whole combined with certain gestures and signs which had an occult mocking or indecent signification. The *cancan* always implied wild and humorous dancing, such as one sees among peasants and sailors, but it was not at all *necessarily* what our author declares it to be, i.e., *indecent*. I have seen it often enough to know.—*Translator.*

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my opinion, morality does not gain much by the Government intervening with such a display of arms, since forbidden fruit is the most sweetly tempting, and the refined and frequently witty evasion of the censorship has here a more ruinous effect than permitted brutality. This overseeing popular pleasures, however, characterises the present condition of things, and shows how far the French have advanced in freedom.

But it is not only the relations between the sexes which form the subject of obscene dances in the suburbs of Paris. It seems to me sometimes as if there was danced a mockery of all that is noblest and holiest in life, yet which has been so often used by crafty knaves for profit, and so often rendered ridiculous by fools, that the people no longer believe in it, as they once did. Yes, they have lost all faith in the lofty thoughts of which our political and literary Tartuffes sing and say so much,[1] and even the extravagant rhodomontades of weak minds rendered all ideal things to it so ridiculous, that

[1] Heine has himself been very usually classed with these merely mocking and insincere writers, but unjustly. There are those who *confine* themselves to ridicule and sneers, and others who, while ridiculing errors, still search with hope for ideals, and our author was, despite his many contradictions, really of the latter class. He was an inquirer or seeker for truth, in which he believed, though he continually went astray.—*Translator.*

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it found therein only hollow phrases or the so-called *blague*. And as this desolate manner of seeing all things is represented by Robert Macaire,[1] so it shows itself in the dance of the people, which may be regarded as an actual pantomime of Robert Macairism. He who has any idea of the latter can understand that unspeakable dance, which is a danced mockery, sneering not only at the relations of the sexes, but also those of domestic life, and at all which is good and beautiful, and of every kind of enthusiasm, of patriotism, truth, faith, family feelings, heroism, and divinity. I repeat it, I always feel an indescribable misery at the sight of the people dancing in the places of public amusement in Paris, and this is especially the case in the days of the Carnival, when the mad masquerade carries the demoniac enjoyment to the monstrous and horrible. I was almost seized with terror when I was lately in one of those wild *fêtes de nuit* which are now given in the Opera Comique, and where, by the way, the reeling spectral show is far more splendidly carried out than in the balls of the Grand Opera. Here Beelzebub makes

[1] Our author might here have said as truly, Victor Hugo, who carried eloquent and elegant emptiness to a pitch beyond all precedent. I once heard this great man make a speech of half-an-hour's duration in 1878 before the International Literary Congress, which was simply the perfection of *vox et prætera nihil*, or sounds without sense.—*Translator.*

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music with a complete orchestra—a deafening music, which splits our ears, while the piercing light of the gas dazzles and tortures the eyes like hell-fire. This is the lost valley of which nurses tell; here are dancing unearthly awful beings, as with us in the Walpurgis night, and many a one among them is very pretty, and cannot quite cast aside, despite all degradation, that grace which is inborn in these diabolical Frenchwomen. But when the blare of the trumpets announces the last *galop*—the terrible *galop ronde*—then the Satanic spectacle reaches the height of madness; it seems as if the ceiling would split asunder, and the whole infernal company come swarming out on broomsticks, pitchforks, great wooden spoons, roaring the sacramental words, "*Oben hinaus, nirgends an!*" ("Up and out, never touch!"). Then it would be a terrible moment for one of our countrymen newly arrived from over the Rhine, and who knowing nothing of magic, cannot pronounce the spell which must be uttered in order not to be whirled away with the Wild Hunt, unless he can recall the old German prayer of his grandmother, which ought to be recited in low tones when pretty French sorceresses threaten to draw you into eternal damnation.[1]

[1] There are several trifling additions in the French text of this description of the ball, which I have incorporated into the

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translation without specification. The reader cannot have failed to observe that the author is somewhat contradictory, when, after describing the prevalence of outrageous conduct at popular balls (and such conduct was really far more common then than he gives us to suppose), he proceeds to blame the Government for placing policemen to prevent such disorder. Yet, after making every deduction from merit, this article must be regarded as admirably conceived and written, inspired with truthful sentiment, and extremely sagacious as describing, with great succinctness, the great defect of the French mind—the disposition to accept words for ideas, style for thought, and theatrical noise for ornament. From such a devoted and sincere admirer of France as Heine was, these remarks have a deep significance. And marvellously deep and moving to those who can understand them are his observations on the shallowness, soullessness, and despair evinced by the mockery of *all* that is great, noble, or refined in the popular dances or Macaire types of the lower orders of Paris. Every year sees this want of faith, ideals, or hope spreading upward into the highest classes, even as an Irish bog spreads from the valley or plain up the mountain-side, destroying all fertility as it climbs. It is a terrible subject, and one which perhaps involves the most terrible social problem of the future.—*Translator.*

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ROSSINI AND MENDELSSOHN.

PARIS, *April* 15, 1842.

LAST year, just as I came into Cette on a fine summer afternoon, I saw passing along the *quai*, which lies by the Mediterranean, a procession which I shall never forget. First of all in it marched the priestly brotherhoods or *confréries*, in their red, white, or black garments, and the penitents, whose heads were covered by capucins, in which were two holes, from which the eyes glared out ghost-like, bearing in their hands burning wax candles or banners of the cross. Then came the different orders of monks, and following them a multitude of the laity, women and men, pale, broken forms, who tottered piously along with an affecting and sad sing-song. I had often seen the like in my infancy on the Rhine, and I cannot deny that those sounds awoke in me a certain sorrow and a kind of home-sickness. But what I had never seen before, and which seemed to be of neighbouring Spanish origin, was the troop of children who played the Passion. There was a little boy (*Bübchen*), dressed as the Saviour

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is usually represented, the crown of thorns on his head, his long golden locks flowing and waving sorrowfully down, creeping along bending under the weight of an enormous wooden cross. On his brow were coarsely-painted wounds, as also on his hands and bare feet. By his side walked a little girl dressed entirely in black, who, as the *Mater Dolorosa*, bore in her breast several swords with gilt hilts, and she indeed seemed to be almost melting in tears, an image of the deepest woe. Other little boys who came next represented the Apostles, and among them was a little Judas with red hair and a purse in his hand. Two urchins, helmeted and weaponed as Roman soldiers, brandished sabres. Other juvenile actors wore monkish dresses and ecclesiastical ornaments; there were little Capucins, little Jesuits, little bishops, with mitres and crosiers, and darling little nuns, none certainly more than six years of age. Strangest of all, there were some children dressed as cupids, with silken wings and golden quivers, and immediately close to Christ were two little creatures, smaller than himself, and hardly four years old, in old-fashioned shepherds' dresses, with diminutive hats well ribboned. They were pretty creatures, as nice to kiss as dolls of marchpane. They were probably intended for the shepherds who stand about the manger and the infant Jesus.

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Would any one believe it? This sight awoke in my soul the most seriously pious feelings, and that those were little innocent children who acted the greatest and most colossal martyrdom made it more touching! This was not a mere mockery in the historical grand style; no pious hypocritical grimacing, no Berlin falsehoods of faith.[1] It was the most naïve expression of the most profound thought, and it was the simple descent to (*herablassend*) childish forms which prevented the subject from weighing destructively on our soul or

[1] This manifestation of "the *most* seriously pious feelings," of which *he* was at least capable, by Heinrich Heine, is indeed touching. It was probably truly evoked by the cupids, aided by the rococo shepherds and shepherdesses *à la* Watteau. It may be here remarked, that but for this short-sighted perseverance in attempting to impress only *the lower orders* or the ignorant by childish theatrical display, the Roman Church might have retained, or at least regained, most of its power. The Salvation Army is committing a similar mistake, and thereby doing more to practically injure Christianity than all the agnostic philosophers and infidel writers put together. For the great body of the Christian Protestant current religion consists of sincerity, common-sense, and respectability, and all who hold to it are offended by shallow theatrical show, and braying, "blood-and-fire," rampant vulgarity. But the only things which the Catholic Church has thus far borrowed from the Protestants are priestly morality and mediæval art. Perhaps simplicity in worship may come in time; but the Church must hurry—she is going fast. As there are many people who cannot distinguish between the funny and foolish, so our author here confounds *naïveté* or simplicity with sheer silliness in a manner which indicates an almost total ignorance of the former.—*Translator.*

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from destroying itself. This subject is of such a tremendous power of pain and sublimity, that it rises above the most heroically grand or most pathetically extensive means of representation. For this reason the greatest artists have in painting, as well as in music, always made charming, with as many flowers as possible, the transcendent terrors of the Passion, and softened its bloody earnestness by playful tenderness, as Rossini did when he composed his *Stabat Mater*.

This last musical composition, the *Stabat* of Rossini, was the great remarkable event of the past season; it is still being discussed among the events of the day, and even the severe criticisms which have, from a North German point of view, been raised against the great master, indicate most strikingly the originality and depth of his genius. "The execution is too worldly, too sensuous, too playful for its spiritual subject; it is too light, too agreeable, too entertaining," are the groans and plaints of certain heavy, tiresome, criti-captious men (*Kritikaster*), who, if they do not deliberately sham extravagant spirituality, have certainly tortured themselves into very limited and erroneous ideas regarding sacred music. As among painters, so there prevails among musicians entirely false views as to the treatment of religious subjects. The former think that the truly Christian must be repre-

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sented in delicately meagre outlines, as if in grief or careworn, and colourless as possible, and the designs of Overbeck are in this respect their ideal. To contradict this argument by a fact, I would only call attention to the religious pictures of the Spanish school, in which fulness of outline and of colour prevails, yet no one will deny that these Spanish pictures breathe the most vigorous Christianity,[1] and that their creators were certainly not less inspired with faith than the celebrated masters who have gone over to Catholicism in Rome in order to paint with more unmitigated fervour. It is not the external haggardness and paleness which is a sign of the deepest Christianity in art, but a certain internal transcendentalism (*Ueberschwänglichkeit*), which cannot be acquired by baptism or study in music or in painting, for which reason I find the *Stabat* of Rossini more truly Christian than the *Paulus* of Felix Mendelssohn, which is praised by the adversaries of Rossini as a model of Christian style.[2]

Heaven forbid that I should utter a reproach against so meritorious a master as the composer of *Paulus*, and least of all would it ever occur to the writer of these pages to detract from the

[1] The French version here gives *ungeschwächteste Christenthum* as "le christianisme le plus spiritualisé et le plus idéal!"

[2] *Christenthümlichkeit*, a fearfully rococo word, which can only be truly translated as *Christiandomliness.—Translator.*

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Christianity of the oratorio in question because Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy is by birth a Jew. But I cannot refrain from pointing out the fact that in the year when M. Mendelssohn began on Christianity in Berlin—he was baptized in his thirteenth year—Rossini had fallen off from it, and had thrown himself altogether into the worldliness of opera-music. Now that he has in turn abandoned these and dreamed himself back into the Roman Catholic memories of his youth, or into the times when he sang in the Cathedral of Pesaro as a choir-boy or acted as acolyte at the mass; now when the old sounds of the organ again resounded in his memory, and he grasped the pen to write a *Stabat*, he had indeed little need to first scientifically construe the *Génie du Christianisme*, and then much less to slavishly copy Handel or Sebastian Bach. He had only to again call up the earliest sounds of childhood from his soul, and it is a wondrous thing, however solemnly and profoundly or in the depth of pain these chords rang, however powerfully they sighed forth the most powerful[1] and bled, they still kept through it all something childlike, and reminded me of the Passion by the children which I had seen in Cette. Yes, I involuntarily recalled that pious little masquerade when I was

[1] "So gewaltig sie auch das Gewaltigste ausseufzen."

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first present at the execution of the *Stabat* by Rossini. The vast and sublime martyrdom was here presented, but in the naïve accents of youth; the agonising plaint of the Mater Dolorosa rose but from the throats of innocent little girls, and the black crape of deepest mourning rustled the wings of all the cupids of grace and sweetness. The terrors of the Crucifixion were softened as with pleasant pastoral play, and the feeling of the infinite swept round and enclosed the whole, like the blue heaven which shone down on the procession of Cette—like the blue sea by whose borders it passed along with music and with song. That is the eternal grace and charm of Rossini, his imperturbable serenity, which no impresario and no music-dealer could destroy or even disturb. With whatever vile injustice or refined treachery he has been treated, I fear full often, in life, we still never find in his musical works a drop of gall. Like the ancient spring of Arethusa, which kept its original sweetness though it ran through the bitter water of the sea, so the heart of Rossini would retain its melodious loveliness and sweetness although it had drained to the dregs all the wormwood of this world.

As I have said, the *Stabat* of the great *maestro* was the prominent musical event of this year. As regards the first performance, which determines the fashion (*tonangebende*), I need say nothing

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save that Italians sang. The hall of the Italian Opera seemed to be the fore-court of heaven, in which sainted nightingales were sobbing, and the most fashionable tears flowing freely. *La France Musicale* also gave in its concerts the greater portion of the *Stabat*, and—*comme il va sans dire*—with immense applause. In these concerts we also heard the *Paulus* of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, who by this vicinity attracted our attention and provoked comparison with Rossini. With the mass of the public this comparison was by no means to the advantage of our young fellow-countryman; it was as if one should compare the Apennines of Italy with the Templower Hill near Berlin. Still the Templower Hill has its merits, and it attracts the respect of many because it has a cross on its summit: "In this sign thou shalt conquer." Of course not in France, the country of infidelity, where M. Mendelssohn has always failed. He was the sacrificial lamb of the season, while Rossini was the musical lion, whose delightful roar is still ringing. It is here reported that M. Felix Mendelssohn will within a few days be here in Paris. This much is certain, that, through high influence and diplomatic effort,[1] M. Leon Pillet

[1] French version—"C'est que par l'intercession de *piétistes* et de diplomates d'un grand pouvoir." Which was unfair, if not altogether untrue.—*Translator.*

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has been induced to have a libretto written by M. Scribe, for which M. Mendelssohn is to compose a great opera. Will our young fellow-countryman accomplish this with success? I do not know. His artistic gifts are great, but they have very serious limits and lackings. I find, as regards talent, a great likeness between M. Felix Mendelssohn and Mademoiselle Rachel Felix, the tragic artist. What is peculiar to both is a great, severe, very serious seriousness, a decided, almost urgent, disposition to classic models, the most refined and intelligent penetration, and finally, a total want of *naïveté*, or sincere naturalness. But was there ever in art really original genius or genial originality without *naïveté?* To this day such a thing has never been known.

The criticism of Rossini by Heine is characterised by remarkable sagacity or insight, allied to enthusiastic admiration, the whole being sketched with a bold hand in a few strokes with the vigour and ability of a true artist. The illustration by a description of the children's procession at Cette is perfect of its kind. It may indeed be questioned whether, as a specimen of argument by mere illustration or poetic reasoning, it has ever been surpassed. But even more remarkable and quite as truthful is his comment on Mademoiselle Rachel, which is the more entitled to admiration because when it appeared there was probably not a soul living who would admit its justice. Rachel had, indeed, an absolutely practical, worldly-keen

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perception of what there was in the old French classical drama which moved or excited people, and great readiness in profiting by lessons, criticisms, and the public. She had a deep and strange, rather than a beautiful voice ; but she had learned how to produce with it effects which astonished the multitude, simply because they implied difficulties overcome. Of all her *tours de force*, the one which always "brought down the house" with its most tremendous applause was, when she had thrown herself into a terrible spasm of excitement, to at once recover in a second, and proceed with calmest voice and countenance. This, which displeased me as a mere trick, was, I soon found, the key to all of Rachel's best play. There was, as Heine says, or fully implies, a want of the "genial" or "natural" depth of feeling and of *naïveté*, although there were such clever approaches to it all, that a *blasé* old theatre-goer could not be made to understand her deficiencies. Rachel had no interest in what she played ; the subject was to her simply nothing. It is said that once when she was playing in a tragedy of five acts, it was in her *rôle* to die at the end of the fourth. As it appeared one day in conversation, after the play had had a long run, that Mademoiselle Rachel did not know how it ended, she confessed she had never read the fifth act. Rachel, in a word, had talent, but no heart and no *great* genius. Her art meant for her simply the effect which she could produce on others ; she did not enjoy acting in itself, as did Kean, or Mrs. Siddons, or Frederick Lemâitre, and Mademoiselle Dejazet.—*Translator.*

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THE MUSICAL SEASON OF 1843.

FIRST PAPER.

PARIS, *March* 20, 1843.

THE wearisomeness or ennui which the classical tragedy of the French exhales, like a benumbing vapour, was never better felt than by that good citizen's wife of the time of Louis XIV., who said to her children, "Do not envy the nobility, and forgive them their pride; for, as the punishment of Heaven, they must be bored to death every night in the Théâtre Français." The old *régime* has departed, and the sceptre has passed into the hands of the citizens; but it must be that these new rulers also have many sins to atone for, and the anger of the gods afflicts them more intolerably than it did their predecessors in the realm, for they must not only drain the mouldy dregs of the ancient opiate poured forth for them every night by Mademoiselle Rachel, but must now even devour that refuse of our German Romantic kitchen, the versified *sauer-*

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kraut known as the *Burgraves* of Victor Hugo. I will not waste a word in discussing the value of this indigestible piece of shop-work, which is presented with all possible pretensions, especially with the historical, since all the knowledge of Victor Hugo as to the time and place of his play are drawn entirely from the French translation of Schreiber's "Handbook for Travellers on the Rhine."[1] Has this man, who only one year ago dared to say in the public Academy that German genius has come to an end—"*La pensée allemande est rentrée dans l'ombre*"—has this great eagle of poetry really soared this time so far above all his contemporaries? Truly, by no means. His work indicates neither poetic breadth nor harmony, neither inspiration nor free thought; it has not a spark of genius; nothing, in fact, but bombastic unnaturalness[2] and showy declamation. We find in it angular wooden forms, overloaded with tasteless frippery and tinsel, moved by visible

[1] This is fearfully severe, but probably quite true. I believe that in all the history of literature there is no instance of any writer or poet who had raised himself to such a height as Victor Hugo achieved with such a very slender store of knowledge or reading, and who yet made such arrogant pretence of erudition. All of his works bear the impress of having been "coached up."—*Translator.*

[2] *Gespreizte Unnatur. Spreizen*, to spread one's self, which, in this sense, is accurately conveyed by the American slang term, the whole expression here being equivalent to "high falutin."—*Translator.*

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wires, an uncanny, mournful puppet-show, a gross and cramped aping of life, animated through and through with sham passion. Nothing is so repugnant to me as this Hugoistic passion, which behaves so like glowing fire, and flames up so wildly without, and is so wretchedly sober and frosty within. This cold passion, which is served up to us in such blazing figures of speech, always reminds me of the roasted ice which the Chinese prepare so artistically by holding a lump of something frozen, wrapped in a thin coat of dough, for a minute over the fire. It is an antithetic dainty, which must be swallowed at once, and which, with its hot rind, burns the lips and tongue while it cools the stomach.[1]

But the ruling *bourgeoisie* has to endure for its sins not only old Classic tragedies, which are *not* Classic, and trilogies of Burgraves of triple tiresomeness,[2] but the heavenly powers have bestowed or inflicted on them a far more terrible artistic pleasure, namely, the pianoforte, from which there is now no escape anywhere, and which is heard ringing in every house and in all

[1] I may be excused for indicating this as a *chef-d'œuvre* of simile, which shows the poet when disguised in prose. And it may be said truly that Heine was never prosaic in his poetry, but was often, though seldom in excess, poetic in his prose.—*Translator.*

[2] This reference to the trilogies is only given in the French version.

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society by night as well as by day. Yes, *piano-forte* is the name of the instrument of martyrdom wherewith fashionable life is specially tortured and punished for all its usurpations. If only the innocent had not to suffer with the guilty! This eternal *carillon* of pianoing is really intolerable. (Woe is me! just at this instant my two lady neighbours in the next apartment, two youthful daughters of Albion, are playing a brilliant *morceau de piano à deux mains gauches*—a brilliant duo with their two left hands!). These jingling sounds without natural cadence, this heartless whizzing, this arch-prosaic sudden tumbling and pecking (*Schollern und Pickern*), this *forte-piano*, kills all our thoughts and feelings, and we become stupid, apathetic, idiotic. This taking the upper hand by piano-playing, and also the great triumphal tours and tournaments of the piano *virtuosi*, are characteristic of our time, and distinctly declare the victory of machinery over mind. Technical facility, the precision of an automaton, the identification of self with the stringed wood, the transition of humanity into a tuned instrument of sound (*die tonende Instrumentwerdung des Menschen*),[1] is now praised and exalted as the

[1] The instru-*mental*-ising of man appears, with the help of a pun, to give this remarkable word a little more closely.—*Translator.*

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highest attainable. Therefore like unto swarms of locusts do the piano-fortuosi come flying every year to Paris, not so much to make money as a name, which shall give them in other lands an all the greater pecuniary harvest. Paris is for them a kind of bulletin-board, or hoarding for advertisements, on which their names may be read in tremendous letters. I say that their name and fame are to be read, for it is the Parisian press which announces them to a believing world, and these *virtuosi* show their virtuosity with a vengeance in the grand art of working the press and the editors. They know how to get round the most recalcitrant, and to make themselves heard by the deafest; for men are always men, susceptible to flattery, and liking to play the part of a protector—and one hand washes another; the dirtier hand is not, however, generally that of the editor, and even the venal flatterer is at the same time a befooled innocent who is half paid with futile praise. There is much said of the venality of the press, but here the world is mistaken. On the contrary, it is the press which is generally cheated, and this is especially true as regards celebrated *virtuosi*. Celebrated they are indeed, one and all, in the puffs which they work into print, either in their own distinguished persons or by aid of a brother or mother. It is hardly

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credible how humbly they beg in newspaper offices for the least crumb of praise, or how they will twist and turn to get it. While I was as yet in the good graces of the director of the *Gazette Musicale* (which I unfortunately lost by youthful folly), I could see with my own eyes how those great celebrities lay at his feet, and crawled and wagged their tails, all to be a little praised in his journal, and we may say of our highly celebrated *virtuosi* who receive such homage in all the capitals of Europe, that, in the words of Beranger, the dust from the boots of Moritz Schlesinger is still visible on their laurels.

No one has an idea of the extent to which these persons speculate on our credulity, unless he can witness their indefatigable perseverance in its time and place. I once encountered, in the bureau of the Gazette referred to, a ragged old man who announced himself as the father of a distinguished *virtuoso*, and who begged the editor to insert a puff (*réclame*) in which certain noble traits from the artistic life of his son were described for the benefit of the public. The Celebrated One had, for example, given, with extraordinary success, a concert in the South of France, and devoted the proceeds to the restoration of a much-ruined Gothic church. At another time he had in like manner benefited an inun-

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dated widow, and made up to an aged schoolmaster the loss of his only cow. During my conversation with the father of this friend of humanity, the old man innocently confessed that *Monsieur son fils* really did not do as much for him as he might, and sometimes left him quite destitute. I would hereby advise this distinguished performer to give for once a concert for the benefit of the ragged trousers of his old father.

When we see so much of this pitiful business, one cannot really find fault with the Swedish students, who expressed themselves somewhat too strongly against the evil of the apotheosising *virtuosi*, and who gave to the celebrated Ole Bull the well-known ovation on his arrival in Upsala. The celebrated guest, expecting that the students would unharness his horses and draw him themselves, and awaiting crowns of flowers and torchlight processions, received all at once a tremendous shower of blows with sticks in his honour, or a truly Northern surprise.[1]

The matadores of this year's season were

[1] When I was at the same place, Upsala, in 1889, as a member of the Oriental Congress, the conduct of the students, though they did not receive us with blows, struck me as singularly rude and insolent, and it was roundly rated as such in the newspapers. It was in bad taste in Heine, to say the least, to speak so lightly of the brutal and stupid reception given to Ole Bull, who was a remarkably kind-hearted and

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Sivori and Dreyschock. The first is a fiddler, and I place him as such before the latter, the terrible piano-thumper. [Among violinists, skill is not entirely the result of mechanical fingering and mere technicality, as with the pianists. The violin is an instrument which has almost human caprices, and which is, so to speak, in sympathetic relation to the disposition of the artist. The least discomfort, the slightest mental trouble, a breath of feeling, manifests itself in a prompt and direct echo, which may well come from this, that the violin is pressed so closely to the breast,

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benevolent man. I hardly think he would have done so could he have heard the eulogies which the great violinist lavished on him in conversation with me. They were to the effect that Heine was in society by far the most agreeable man whom he had ever met, and that among the most brilliant wits of Paris, he outdid all, invariably sparkling—*sprudelnd*—like a fountain, and talking well on all subjects. I regret having been inadvertently and innocently the cause of great trouble to Ole Bull. I had made casually in London the mere acquaintance of a man to whom I promptly gave the cold shoulder when he called on me afterwards in America. This man, as the artist assured me, subsequently, by using my name, and representing me as one who would guarantee his honesty, obtained a situation as agent for his troupe, and absconded, not only with money, but also injured his employer seriously in other respects. Ole Bull, like many artists, was a man of easy faith; had he at first referred to me, this would not have happened. It is evidently a gratuitous assumption by Heine that Ole Bull expected the students to play horse for him. That they indulged in "horse-play" appears by the text.—*Translator.*

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and catches the beating of our hearts. This is, however, only the case with artists who really have hearts which beat in their bosoms, and above all, souls. The more sober and heartless the violinist, the more uniform will his execution be, and he can count upon the obedience of his fiddle at any hour in any place. But this valued certainty is only the result of a limited mind, and it is just the greatest masters whose play is often dependent on external and internal influences. I have never heard any one play better, or at times worse, than Paganini, and I can say the same thing in favour of Ernst. This latter, Ernst, who is perhaps the greatest violinist of our time, was like Paganini in his faults as in his genius. His absence this winter caused many regrets among all friends of music who know how to value high art.[1] Signor Sivori was a very flat compensation, but yet we heard him with great pleasure. Since he was born in Genoa, and perhaps as a child in running about in the narrow streets of his native city, where no one can be avoided, sometimes met Paganini, he has been proclaimed here as his pupil. No, Paganini never had a pupil, and he could not have one, because the best which

[1] The last half of this sentence is wanting in the French version.

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he knew, or that which is highest in art, can never be taught nor learned.[1]

What is the highest art? That which is the highest in all other manifestations of life—the self-conscious freedom of genius. Not only a piece of music which has been composed in the fulness of that self-consciousness, but also the mere execution of it may be regarded as the artistic highest when there is breathed on us from it that marvellous air of the infinite which causes us to feel directly that the performer stands with the composer on the same free spiritual height, and that he is also as free. Yes, this self-consciousness of freedom in art reveals itself especially in treatment or in form, never in the subject itself. We may indeed assert to the contrary, that those artists who have chosen liberty itself, or the setting mankind free for a theme, are generally limited, fettered souls, really in themselves confined. This remark holds specially good to-day in German poetry, where we see that the unbridled defiant singers of freedom, when

[1] A very empty and unsatisfactory reason for proving that Sivori never had lessons from the great violinist. It would establish the absurdity that no genius ever taught anybody anything. I have often heard Sivori; his playing was what might be called *anmuthig*, pleasing, graceful, and fascinating. He had decided genius, but it did not assume powerful so much as agreeable forms.—*Translator.*

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looked at by daylight, are mostly very narrow natures, Philistines whose pig-tails or queues peep out from under their red caps—ephemeral one-day flies, of whom Goethe would say—

"Hear the paltry angry fly rant!
Buzzing with a hope to hurt,
How it drops its speck of dirt
On the nose of a grim tyrant!"

Really great poets have always treated the great interests of their time in another form than that of newspaper leaders in rhyme, and have troubled themselves very little when the servile mob, whose coarseness revolts them, reproaches them with aristocracy.[1]

[1] To which the French version adds—"Et de marque de charactère."

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SECOND PAPER.

PARIS, *March 26*, 1843.

I HAVE mentioned Messieurs Sivori and Dreyschock as most remarkable phenomena of the musical season of this year. The latter has reaped an immense harvest of praise, and I report truly that public opinion has proclaimed him as one of the greatest of pianists and ranked him with the most famous of them. He makes an infernal row (*Er macht einen höllischen Spektakel*). You would not think you were listening to a Dreyschock, but receiving a dry-shock of electricity.[1] As the wind on the evening of the concert was south-west,[2] you possibly heard in Augsburg the tremendous sounds. At such a

[1] "Man glaubt nicht einen pianisten Dreyschock, sondern drei Schock Pianisten zu hören." "You do not think that you are listening to one, but to nine-score pianists." It is hardly necessary to state that the French version passes over this convulsion of musical scores in silent scorn. *Schock*, threescore, has retained a trace of its old meaning in English, when we speak of a shock of wheat, which means, I believe, from fifteen to twenty sheaves. It also means in German a heap or pile.

[2] French version—*Au nord-ouest.*

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distance the effect may have been agreeable; but here, in the department of the Seine, our tympanums or ear-drums threaten to burst when this piano-banger storms away. Hang thyself, O Franz Liszt! verily thou art but a paltry graven image of a wind-idol compared to this thunder-god who bindeth the storms together like birch-twigs and therewith lashes the ocean.

There[1] was a Dane named Villmers, who was listened to with good results, and who will doubtless in time drum and thrum his way up to the summit of his art. The older pianists are falling away little by little into the shadows of oblivion, and now these poor played-out invalids of fame must pay penance for having been over-praised in their youth. Only Kalkbrenner holds his own a little. He reappeared this winter in the concert of a pupil; there still plays on his lips that embalmed and balmy smile which we lately noted in an Egyptian Pharaoh when his mummy was unrolled in the museum here. After an absence of more than twenty-five years, M. Kalkbrenner lately revisited London, the scene of his earliest success, and harvested a great crop of fame. The best is

[1] The following sentence is omitted in the French version.—*Translator.*

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that he returned with his neck unbroken,[1] and we now need no longer put faith in the mysterious report that M. Kalkbrenner avoided England so long on account of the unhealthy law which there prevails of punishing the gallant crime of bigamy with the halter.[2] We may

[1] The French version here gives the following original passages:—"Il est revenu sain et sauf, les poches pleines de guinées et la tête plus vide que jamais. Il revient en triumphateur, et il nous raconte combien sa majesté la reine d'Angleterre a été enchantée de le voir si bien portant, et combien elle s'est sentie flattée de sa visite à Windsor, ou dans quelque autre château dont j'ai oublié le nom. Oui, le grand Kalkbrenner est revenu sain et sauf à sa residence de Paris, où il a retrouvé également en bonne santé tous ses admirateurs, ses magnifiques pianoforte qu'il fabrique de compagnie avec M. Pleyel, ses nombreux élèves qui se composent de tous les artistes auxquels il a parlé seulement une fois dans sa vie, et enfin sa collection de tableaux dont il prétend qu'aucun prince ne pourrait la payer. Il va sans dire qu'il a aussi retrouvé ici ce petit garçon de huit ans, qu'il appele monsieur son fils, et à qui il accorde encore plus de talent musical qu'a lui-même, le declarant supérieur à Mozart. Ce petit bonhomme lymphatique et maladivement boursouflué, qui dans tous les cas dépasse déjà monsieur son père sous le rapport de la modestie, écoute son propre éloge avec le plus imperturbable sangfroid; et de l'air d'un viellard ennuyé et fatigué des honneurs et des ovations du monde, il raconte lui-même ses succès à la cour, où les belles princesses lui auraient baisé sa petite main blanche. L'outreouidance de ce petit, de ce fœtus blasé, est aussi rebutante que comique. Je ne sais pas si M. Kalkbrenner à également retrouvé à Paris la brave marchande de poissons," &c., &c.

[2] Public performers seem to be public property, and this scandal reminds me that many years ago, when an Italian opera company was in New York, there appeared in a local Italian

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therefore assume that the story was a fable, for it is a fact that M. Kalkbrenner has returned to his admirers here, to the beautiful pianos which he manufactures in company with M. Pleyel, and to his fair pupils, who all develop themselves into his mistresses—in the French sense of the word; to his gallery of pictures, which, as he declares, no prince can afford to buy; to his hopeful son, who already surpasses his father in modesty; and to the noble-hearted fishwoman who yielded to him the famous turbot which the head-cook of the Prince of Benevento, Talleyrand-Perigord, former Bishop of Autun, had already ordered for his master. The *poissarde* refused for a long time to yield the turbot in question to the famous pianist, who had gone incognito to the fish-market; but when he put down his card, and the poor soul read on it the name of "Kalkbrenner," she at once ordered the fish to be carried to his house; nay, it was long before she could be induced to take payment for it, as she had been, as she declared, sufficiently remunerated by so great an honour. German codfish aristocrats (*Stockfische*) are vexed at such a "fish story,"[1] because they

newspaper a list of its members, with the names or mention of the wives which every man had left behind him in Italy or elsewhere. I was informed on good authority that they all treated it as a joke.—*Translator.*

[1] The French version, for once, boldly grapples this lion in

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are not able to spread themselves so grandly in this wise like M. Kalkbrenner, and because, over and beyond this, they envy his elegant mien, his admirably attired form, his polish and sweetness, his whole candied sugar-cake exterior, which is, however, disagreeably jarred to the calm observer by many involuntary Berlinisms of the lowest class, so that Koreff said as wittily as neatly of him that he looked like a bon-bon which had fallen into the mud.

Monsieur Pixis is a contemporary of M. Kalkbrenner, and though of an even inferior order, we will mention him as a curiosity. But is M. Pixis really living? He himself declares that he is, and appeals to the testimony of M. Sina, the celebrated bather of Boulogne, who must not be confused with Mount Sinai. We will therefore believe this brave master of the waves, though many evil tongues declare that M. Pixis never existed at all. No, the latter is a man who really lives; I say a man, though a zoologist would give him a longer name, whereby hangs a tale. M. Pixis came to Paris at the time of the Invasion, when the Apollo Belvedere was restored to the Romans, and had to leave Paris. The

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the path, and conquers it bravely with the help of italics as follows:—"Un tel *canard* cause du dépit à plus d'un dindon allemand."—*Translator.*

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acquisition of M. Pixis must therefore be regarded as an equivalent for the loss of Apollo. He played the piano, composed nicely and prettily, and his musical pieces were in great demand by dealers in canary-birds, who teach the latter tunes on bird-organs. These yellow beings only required to have a composition by M. Pixis played to them once, when they immediately caught and repeated it, to the delight of all hearers, who cried aloud, "*Pixissime!*" Since the elder Bourbons left the scene, *Pixissime!* is no longer shouted; the new birds require new tunes.[1]

M. Pixis is also somewhat remarkable by his external appearance, for he has the greatest nose in the musical world; and, to make this as striking as possible, he often shows himself in company with a composer of romances who has no nose at all, for which he lately received the cross of the Legion of Honour; for it certainly could not have

[1] Here the French version, fired perhaps with its late success, ventures on an entirely original, although quite unavoidable, pun of its own: "Depuis que les Bourbons de la branche ainée ont quitté la scène, on ne crie plus *Pixissime!* les nouveaux serins demandent de nouvelles melodies." *Serin* or *serein* is equivalent to "goose" in slang. In the original MS. the conclusion of this sentence ran thus: "And M. Pixis is, like Kalkbrenner, a poor mummy; in fact, the mummy of an ibis. The long bill of an ibis has a striking resemblance to the fabulously long nose of Pixis, which belongs to the wonders of the musical world, and which has become the butt of so many bad jokes," &c.—*Translator.*

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been for his music that M. Passeron has been decorated. It is also said that he will be appointed Director of the Grand Opera, because he is the only man of whom there is no danger that Maestro Giacomo Meyerbeer will ever lead him by the nose.[1]

M. Herz belongs, like Kalkbrenner and Pixis, to the mummies; he is only distinguished by his beautiful concert-hall; he has long been dead, and was recently married.[2] Among the pianists here who are at present most in vogue are Halle and Edward Wolf; but we will specially notice only the latter, because he is also a composer. He is fertile and full of *verve* and originality. His studies for the pianoforte are the most celebrated of his works, wherefore he is quite popular. Stephen Heller is more of a composer than a performer, though he is greatly admired for his playing. His musical productions all bear the

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[1] There is an extraordinary similarity in this passage on Messrs. Pixis and Passeron to a tale by Edgar Allan Poe, in which a man showed himself in society, and became a lion of the season on account of his immensely long nose, but was ere long dethroned or supplanted by a man with no nose at all. I believe, however, that Poe's tale has precedence in point of time, and that it was suggested to him by the nose described by Slawkenbergius in Sterne's "Sentimental Journey."—*Translator.*

[2] This passage is omitted in the French version, also a few lines in the next sentence.—*Translator.*

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stamp of distinguished talent, and he belongs already to the great masters. He is a true artist, without affectation and without exaggeration; a Romantic spirit in a Classic form.

Thalberg has now been two months in Paris, but will give no concerts himself, and only play once this week in one given by a friend. This artist distinguishes himself, to his great advantage, from his colleagues of the piano, I may almost say, by his musical manners.[1] As in his life, so in his art, Thalberg manifests inborn tact; his style (*Vortrag*) is so gentlemanlike, so well-off, so respectable, so free from grimace, so utterly devoid of forced or affected genius or geniality, so clear from that arrogant clownishness (*renommierende Bengelei*) which often covers real cowardice, which we so often find among our musical mushrooms.[2] Healthy women love him; the sickly are not less attracted, although he does not excite their pity by epileptic attacks on the piano, although he does not speculate on over-delicate nerves, and although he

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[1] In the *Augsburger Zeitung* there was in place of this sentence the following:—"Despite my antipathy to the piano, I would make an effort to hear him; but there is something peculiar as regards the tolerance with which I regard him. He enchants me, I may say, by his musical manners; his play is all steeped in harmony."—*Translator.*

[2] This conclusion is wanting in the French version.

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neither electrifies nor galvanises, which are all negative but very beautiful characteristics. He enchants only by a balsam-like melody, by moderate measure and mildness.[1] There is but one pianist whom I prefer to him. That is Chopin, who is, however, much more of a composer than a performer. When he plays, I forget all masters of the instrument or mere skill, and sink into the sweet abyss of his music, into the melancholy rapture of his exquisite and profound creations. Chopin is the great and genial poet of sweet sound, who should only be named with Mozart, or Beethoven, or Rossini.

There has been no want of novelties this winter in the so-called lyrical theatres. The Bouffes gave us *Don Pasquale*, a new work by Signor Donizetti, the musical Raupach.[2] This Italian is not wanting in success; his talent is great, but far greater is his fertility, in which he is unequalled, save by rabbits. In the Opera Comique we have had *La Part du Diable*,[3] the text by Scribe, the music by Auber—a poet and composer who are perfectly paired, being as marvellously matched in their merits as in their mischances. Both have

[1] In the *Allgemeine Zeitung* this sentence is given in place of the four preceding words.

[2] Omitted in the French version.

[3] Known in English as "The Little Devil's Share."

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much wit, grace, invention, even passion—only the former lacks poetry and the latter music. The work finds its public and fills the house.

In the Académie Royale de Musique there is being played "Charles VI.," the text by Cassimir Delavigne, the music by Halevy.[1] Here too we observe an elective similarity between the poet and composer. They have both augmented their natural gifts by noble effort, and they have been formed more by the outward discipline of school than by inborn originality. For this reason, neither have ever fallen into fault or error, as sometimes happens to original genius, and they always give us something agreeable, beautiful, respectable, academic, and classic. Both are noble natures, equally dignified, and in an age when gold hides itself so miserly, we will not haggle over current silver. The "Flying Dutchman" of Dietz has been wretchedly wrecked. I have not heard the opera, but the libretto came in my way, and I saw with regret that the beautiful story which a well-known German author (Heinrich Heine) had imagined in a manner per-

[1] In the French text we have "Charles VI., texte de Delavigne, musique de Halevy. Je ne sais pas si le premier est le grande poëte de ce nom. Dans ce cas ici, &c." As the correction has here been made only in the German text, it might be inferred that the French was the original. The German editor makes no remark on this curious incident.—*Translator.*

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fectly true to tradition, for the stage, had been bungled in the French text.[1]

The "Prophet" of Meyerbeer is expected, and that with an impatience so intolerable that it may pass into irritation. There is being developed here a singular reaction against Meyerbeer, because people in Paris cannot forgive him the popularity which was graciously accorded to him in Berlin. They are so unjust as to make him atone for many political annoyances. Needy talents, who depend on the highest favour for their subsistence, have their services much more readily pardoned than is a great *maestro* who has come into the world with a great property almost amounting to genius.[2] In fact, he has exposed himself to very serious misunderstandings, to which we will return anon.

The absence of Berlioz is perceptible. It is to be hoped that he will bring us much that is beautiful when he returns, and Germany will certainly inspire him, even as he must have inspired the souls beyond the Rhine. He is unquestion-

[1] *Vide* "Florentine Nights," the first volume of this series, p. 130. Heine here declares or intimates that he was the first person to conceive giving a dramatic form to this legend; but if this were really the case—which I very much doubt—there would have been some indication of it in "Schnabelewopski."—*Translator.*

[2] The intimation here is that wealth inherited is a great gift, like that of genius—"*geniales Vermögen.*"

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ably the greatest and most original musician whom France has of late years brought forth; he is far above all French-speaking contemporaries.[1]

As a conscientious correspondent, I must mention that among the Germans in Paris is the excellent Master Conradin Kreutzer. He has acquired here a great reputation by the *Nachtlager in Granada* ("The Night-quarters in Granada") performed by a German company which almost died of hunger. This honoured master has been well known to me from earliest youth, when his compositions of songs enraptured me; to this day they ring in my soul like singing woods with sobbing nightingales and spring breezes perfumed with blossoms. Herr Kreutzer has told me that he will soon set a comic opera to music. May he not stumble on this slippery path, nor be mystified and cheated by the arrant knaves of the French comedian-world, as has happened to so many Germans before him, who even possessed the advantage of having less talent than Herr Kreutzer, and who certainly knew how to move more lightly on the polished floor of Paris! What sad experiences must Richard Wagner have had, who finally, in obedience to the voice of reason and of his belly, wisely renounced the

[1] All of the foregoing, from the words "The Prophet," is omitted in the French version.

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dangerous project of endeavouring to get a foothold on the French stage, and so flew back to the potato-land beyond the Rhine! More advantageously equipped in a material and industrious sense is the old Dessauer,[1] who, as he declares, is composing an opera to order, from the Direction of the Opera Comique. The text will be supplied to him by M. Scribe, who has, however, received security from a banking-house here that in case M. Dessauer should fall through (*bei Durchfall*) a certain sum shall be paid to the distinguished manufacturer of librettos as deduction (*Abtrittsgeld*) and damages. He is quite in the right to take such precautions, seeing that the old Dessauer is not strong on his legs, and suffers from an internal malady of which he continually complains, and which he calls his "melancholy."[2] But who is the old Dessauer? It cannot be the old Dessauer who won so many laurels in the Seven Years' War, whose march became so famous, and whose statue once stood in the garden of the royal castle in Berlin, and which has since fallen. No, dear reader; the Dessauer of whom we speak has never won laurels, nor written a celebrated march, nor had

[1] In the French, M. de Sauer, the true name. Dessau, a district in Germany.

[2] This sentence is chiefly from the French version.

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a statue—which has fallen down—raised to his memory. He is not the Prussian old Dessauer, and this name is only a *nom de guerre*, or perhaps a nickname (*Spitznahme*), given to him on account of his old, cat-backed-up, awkward [1] appearance. He is an old young man, badly preserved. He is not from Dessau, but from Prague, where he possesses in the Hebrew quarter two great clean houses, also one in Vienna, and is reported to be otherwise very well-to-do. He is, therefore, "not obliged to compose," as old Masson, the mother-in-law of the great Giacomo Meyerbeer, would say. But out of love for art he gave up business, applied himself to music, and composed while young an opera called "The Visit to San Cyr," which by dint of noble perseverance was brought out and had a run of a night and a half. As in Prague, so the old Dessauer tried to make his talent known in Vienna, but the clique which is devoted to Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert suppressed him; "he was not understood," which is intelligible enough on account of his slang dialect [2] and a certain nasal pronunciation of

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[1] *Benauten.* "*Benaut* is a slang expression used in the north of Germany, and is hard to translate. The English 'awkward' is nearest to its meaning."—*Dr. Adolf Meyer.*

[2] *Kauderwelsch*, as explained in another note, the common word for slang or jargon, but really a lingo spoken by all vagabonds in Germany. It is about one-half Yiddish or Hebrew,

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German which recalled rotten eggs. And yet it may be that they did understand him, and for that reason would not hear him speak. Then he suffered from hemorrhoids and strangury, so that he got, as he called it, "the melancholy." To recover his spirits he went to Paris, where he won the favour of the celebrated M. Maurice Schlesinger, who published his compositions, and as recompense for these he received a gold watch. After a while, the old Dessauer went to his patron and informed him that the watch would not go. To which Schlesinger replied, "Go! did I ever say it would? Does your music go? It is with me and your compositions just as it is with you and my watch—neither of them go." So spoke the master of the musicians, M. Maurice Schlesinger, as he twitched the end of his shirt-collar upward, and twisted his neck to one side and the other as if the tie had become of a sudden much too tight, as he is accustomed to do when in a passion, for,

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very much corrupted. In the French version this is translated as *baragouin bohémien*, which is quite different, whether as referring to the Czech-Slavonian of Prague, or Bohemian as Gypsy or Romany. The great difference in the three tongues may be thus illustrated: In the first, or *Kauderwelsch*, *bread* is *lechem*, in Bohemian it is *chleba*, in Gypsy *mauro*. But it is very doubtful whether Heine knew anything about these tongues.—*Translator.*

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like all great men, he is very passionate. This uncanny twitching and wriggling of the neck often precedes the most terrible outbursts of rage, and the poor Dessauer was thereby so disordered that he had "the melancholy" that day worse than ever. His noble patron did him great injustice. It was not his fault that things which he composed would never go, since he did all that any mortal might to set them going or to make them spin. For he was on his legs from morn to eve, running about town to beg from any man who had the power to let him have a puff of his poor songs in any newspaper. For he is like a burr upon the coat of every journalist, and unto us he waileth all day long of his great melancholy, and how we, with a few crumbs of praise, might cheer his soul. To win the poorer journalists who work on lesser newspapers, he has a different kind of bait, telling, for example, how he lately gave a breakfast to an editor in the Café de Paris, which meal cost him forty-five francs and ten sous—in fact, he always carries the bill—the *carte payante*—in his trousers-pocket, and produces it on all occasions to prove the truth of his assertion. Yes, the wrathful Schlesinger did the old Dessauer injustice when he thought that the musician did not do all in his power to make the music "go." For the poor soul to this intent does all he can to set not only

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masculine, but also feminine goose-quills into motion. And he has really found an old goose from his native land who, moved by pity, wrote for him a few puffs in flabbiest sentimental German-French, seeking to assuage his melancholy by printed (*gedruckten*) balm. We must praise this good lady all the more, because only pure humanity or philanthropy was here in question, for the old Dessauer would hardly impress women by the charm of his face. As regards this face, opinions differ, some calling it an emetic, and others a purge. It is certain that I am always in a dilemma when I behold him, and know not for which I must decide.[1] The old Dessauer, wishing to show the public that his is not, as was reported, the worst face in the world, had a younger brother imported hither from Prague, and this beautiful youth, who really looks like an Adonis of scurviness, now accompanies him everywhere about Paris.

Excuse me, dear reader, if I entertain you with such muck-flies, but their importunate buzzing can at last compel the most patient of men to grasp the fly-brush. And I would show, too, what dunghill beetles are commended by our

[1] The remarks on the Dessauer here cease in the French version, which is also abridged as regards a few trifling details here and there.—*Translator.*

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honest musical publishers as German nightingales and as followers, even as rivals, of Schubert. Schubert is extremely popular in Paris, and his name is used in the most shameless manner. The most execrable rubbish (*Schund*) appears here under the feigned name of Camille Schubert, and the French, who certainly do not know that the first name of the composer is Franz, are thereby deceived. Poor Schubert! And what texts are put to his music! I speak of the songs by Heinrich Heine, which are here most esteemed, but the text is so vilely translated that the poet was cordially delighted to learn how few the musical publishers are who hesitate to suppress the name of the real author, and place on the title-page of those songs that of an obscure French *parolier*.[1] This was perhaps done out of shrewdness, so as not to recall the *droits d'auteur*. Here in France the author of the words of a song set to music is always entitled to half the price paid. Were this the fashion in Germany, a certain poet whose "Book of Songs" has been plundered (*ausgebeutet*) by all German dealers in music for twenty years, would at least have received from these people

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[1] *Parolier*, a word-hasher, scribbler. From this word to the sentence beginning with "I will end this article," all is omitted from the French version.—*Translator.*

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a word of thanks. But of the many hundreds of musical compositions set to his songs, not one presentation copy has ever been sent to him. May the hour strike also at some time for Germany when the intellectual property of the author shall be as seriously recognised as the cotton property of a night-cap manufacturer. But poets are regarded by us as nightingales, whose only right is to the air; they are without rights—in fact, free as birds or outlaws.[1]

I will end this article with a good deed. I hear that Herr Schindler, the musical director in Cologne, is greatly vexed that I, in my report of the musical season (of 1841), spoke very contemptuously of his white-shirt collars, and asserted that on his visiting-cards and under his name was to be read the inscription, "Ami de Beethoven." This last he denies; but as for the collar, what I asserted is perfectly true, and I never saw such a terribly white and stiff monster of the kind. But as regards the card, I must confess, out of humanity, that I myself really doubt whether any such words were on it. I did not invent the tale, but I perhaps believed in it too readily, just as it happens that, with all

[1] *Vogel-frei*, "bird-free," or outlawed; an old German legal term applied to outlawing, like that of "wolf's-head" in Anglo-Saxon.—*Translator.*

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men, that which is probable is more promptly accepted than that which is true. The first proves that people consider the man as capable of such a folly, and gives us his real measure, while a real fact may be in and for itself a mere accident without characteristic meaning. I did not see the card in question, but I did behold to-day with my own eyes the visiting-card of an inferior Italian singer which bore the words under his name of "*Neveu de M. Rubini.*"[1]

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[1] In the French version—"Où était gravés les mots suivants : *A. Gallinari, Neveu du célèbre Rubini.*" This paper is interesting in several respects. In it the author sketches with vigorous skill, and as great petty malignity, the characters and persons of one well-known and of another extremely obscure musician. It is evident to any reader that Heinrich Heine was never so vivacious or happy in writing as when raking out all the vile gossip and slander which he could find regarding an enemy, generally with very little regard to truth, and then giving to it such a form as would most torment its object, or gratify the vast number of vulgar minds who love to witness torture, however despicable it may be, when applied in print, especially if it be accompanied by wit. That this was very deep in Heine's nature, and not mere superficial thoughtlessness, is shown by his whole life, and the great pride which he took in being regarded as the Pietro Aretino of his time. This consciousness that he was admired as "a great tormentor, dreadful to his foes," induced him to very often "show up" very obscure and harmless individuals, especially those who had no means of retaliation, and that not from any personal ill-feeling, but, like Paulus Grillandus, the great practical organiser of the Inquisition, who directed the torturing of two women to death

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before the Pope, merely to show his skill in the art of inflicting pain.

It is very remarkable that this skill in hitting off and describing characters, and especially in giving evil traits or follies with artistic skill—that is to say, of making the *man* more interesting than his work—in which both Heine and Carlyle excelled, led in both cases to terrible retribution. Heine has in one place cried out against judging genius by anything personal, and then shown us by his own example that the vilest kitchen-gossip or some personal peculiarity in a poet influenced his own judgment far more than all that poet's song. So with Carlyle, whose sight was both telescopic and microscopic, and who showed us the great in a character, but also the little to perfection. Now, most readers can appreciate the latter keenly, but not the former. The result has been a vast increase of late years of so-called biography—in reality, mean gossip. Not long ago, as I have mentioned, I found in one of the largest circulating libraries in Europe two *Lives* of a great poet, but not a line of his works. So it came to pass that in due time the contemptibly petty gossip about Thomas and Jane Carlyle, and Heine's "evil deeds," as set forth by himself in his writings, *i.e.*, his attacks on other men, and himself as continually reflected by himself—*veluti in speculo*—took precedence in the popular mind of all their great work. A good and true biography is a noble piece of history, but, in inverse ratio, that of the mean kind leads to evil. The manner in which the mania for stinging and "showing up" what was petty or mean in characters was developed in these two great writers, and the punishment which it entailed, is one of the most remarkable events in the history of literature.

It may be observed that I have more than once in these notes associated Carlyle with Heine, the reason being the remarkable likeness between the two. Heine was the great apostle to the French, in the last generation, of German literature, as Carlyle was to the Anglo-American world; both were precisely in the same state as advocating a kind of mad and confused radicalism mingled with hero-worship, and both snarled and sneered at everybody and everything by turns, especially the Sage of

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Chelsea, who was, however, by far the most illogical, because he exalted Goethe and hated Hellenism and the flesh as he did the devil, and having preached Pantheism, denied it most contemptibly, in which things Heine was far more honest. Both were devoured by excessive petty feminine love of gossip and of hearing and retailing slander, the difference being that Carlyle sneered at almost everybody, while Heine liked the majority of his friends very much indeed, and only now and then, when "in the dumps," let out his wrath, generally on some wretched "insect." Both, too, were markedly original as regards style, and were in themselves, in almost every way, originals. The charms of art and nature, so deeply blended in Heine's soul, were almost unknown to Carlyle, who felt them as shams, even though shams of God, while against this the latter impresses us as a man of more strength and courage than his German correlative. Of the latter, one is especially tempted as regards mischief-making to compare him with Voltaire, of whom Frederick of Prussia said to Darget, "Il est le plus méchant fou que j'aie connue de ma vie—il n'est bon *qu'a lire;*" or with Sainte-Beuve as "a *devil* of grace and wit, and very often of good sense and reason, an element blind and brilliant, often luminous, and a meteor which does not behave itself, rather than a moral and human person. Such people may be compared to trees whose fruit you select and relish, but you will never care to rest in their shade."

The mention of Sainte-Beuve recalls the fact that, while he has given us the sketch of one writer who was remarkable, like Heine, for marvellous political prophecies, he has in the Abbé Galiani described another who resembled the German in everything else—his wit, his pathos, frivolity, gift for and love of slander, indifference in religion, inconsistency—in short, the Heine of a preceding century. Being an abbé, Galiani was, of course, rather the most sincerely or thoroughly irreligious of the two—in other details they are *arcades ambo*. It has been said in defence of these and sundry other of Heine's letters, that the former were only written for fleeting newspaper gossip, while the latter were not intended for publication at all. This will not hold water. Heine revised the former to make of them

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books, and had an extravagant idea of their literary value; while, as regards the latter, he anticipated with complacency that the time would come when every scrap of his writing, even his letters to his family, would all be printed. This is a weakness almost peculiar to passionate—who are generally also vain—men, who seldom, as in Byron's case, can be brought to believe that a deduction of thirty per cent. from the quantity would enhance the value of the remainder immeasurably as regards the popular estimate of quality. Gray and Poe, who both considered details coolly, were fully aware of this. It may be said that the want of money compelled Heine to turn a penny as he could by re-selling all kinds of "old copy," but as this copy was all carefully revised, translated into French, and certainly believed by the author to be very admirably written, its faults cannot be excused on this score. I have extended this note perhaps a little too much in the face of this principle, because this Second Paper of the Musical Season of 1843 seems to me to contain more that should have been wisely omitted than anything else in the whole work.—*Translator.*

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THE MUSICAL SEASON OF 1844.

FIRST PAPER.

PARIS, *April* 25, 1844.

A tout seigneur tout honneur. We will begin to-day with Berlioz, whose first concert opened the musical season, and so could be considered as its *ouverture.* The more or less familiar pieces which he executed received their due applause, and even the most unimpressive souls were carried away by the might of genius which is manifested in every creation by this great master. There is in his work a flapping of wings which does not indicate an ordinary bird of song; it is a colossal nightingale, a lark of eagle-size, such as we are told existed in the primeval world. Yes, the music of Berlioz has indeed for me something of the early, or even antediluvian world, suggesting gigantic races of animals long passed away, fabled empires, and great mysterious crimes, vast high-towering impossibilities of building—Babylon—the hanging gardens of

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Semiramis; the marvels of Nineveh; the terribly audacious temples of Mizraim, such as we see in the pictures of the Englishman Martin. In fact, if we seek for an analogy in painting, we find elective affinity allied to the most perfect resemblance between Berlioz and the wild Briton, the same daring desire for the tremendous, the giant-like, for material immensity. In the one are startling effects of light and shade—in the other, a crash and clang of instruments; the latter with little melody, and the former almost without colour; in either, little beauty and no tender natural feeling whatever. Their works are neither Classic nor Romantic, they recall neither Greece nor the Catholic Middle Age, but carry us far back to the Assyrian-Babylonian-Egyptian, architecture-ages, and to the massive and stupendous passion which they express.

And what a common-sense, everyday, modern man beside those two lunatics of genius[1] is Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, our greatly celebrated countryman, whom we especially signalise to-day on account of the symphony given by him in the concert-hall of the Conservatoire de Musique. We owe this pleasure to the active zeal

[1] "A côté de ces deux fous de génie." Only in the French version, from which, however, the next sentence is omitted.—*Translator.*

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of his friends and admirers in Paris. Although this symphony was very frostily received in the Conservatoire, it still deserves a recognition of merit from all true critics in art. It is of real beauty, and belongs to Mendelssohn's best works, especially the second theme (*scherzo in F-dur*), and the third adagio in *A-dur*, full of character, and also of true beauty. The instrumentation is admirable.[1] But how is it that this artist, with so much merit and so highly gifted, has still gained no laurels on French ground since the production here of his *Paulus?* Why is it that all efforts for him fail, and that the last desperate endeavour of the Théâtre de l'Odéon—the execution of the chorus of *Antigone*—only had a deplorable result? Mendelssohn always gives us occasion to reflect on the highest problems in æsthetics. He constantly recalls, for example, the great question, What is the difference between Art and Falsehood?[2] We admire in this master, most of all, his great talent for form, for style, his gift for appropriating whatever is most remarkable, his delightfully beautiful summary or plan (*Faktur*), his fine lizard-like ear, his deli-

[1] This sentence was given in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* as a substitute for the preceding.—*Translator.*

[2] *Kunst und Lüge.* In the original letter to the *Augsburger Zeitung* there is this very material difference of idea, "*Zwischen Kunst und Arbeit*"—"between art and *work!*"—*Translator.*

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cate antennæ or snail-horns of perception, and his serious or earnest—I may say passionate—indifference. Should we seek in a sister art for a similar instance, we may find it in poetry, and it is called Ludwig Tieck. This master also knew well how to reproduce that which was most excellent, be it in writing or by declamation. He could even affect the natural and unaffected, and yet never created anything which conquered the masses and remained alive in their hearts.[1] It is peculiar to both that they have a burning longing for dramatic representation, and Mendelssohn may perhaps grow old and grumbling without having once placed anything really great on the boards, for neither has he ever gone to the hearts of the people. The more gifted Mendelssohn may sooner succeed in creating something which may endure, but not on the ground where, above all things, truth and passion are required—that is, on the stage; for Ludwig Tieck, notwithstanding his most ardent yearning, never achieved a theatrical success.[2]

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[1] The following sentence was only in the original letter.—*Translator.*

[2] These remarks, like much which is advanced axiomatically, enclose a mere paradox, if not an untruth. Apart from the stage, Heine first declares that neither Tieck nor Mendelssohn ever effected anything which lived among the people. Deducting from Heine's own songs the music, on which a certain number of them have been held up as by bladders on the stormy sea of

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In addition to the symphony of Mendelssohn, we heard with great interest in the Conservatoire a symphony of the late Mozart, and a not less talented composition by a certain Händel.[1] They were received with great approbation. The two, Mozart and Händel, have at last brought it so far as to have attracted the attention of the French, to do which a long time was naturally needed, since there was no propaganda or syndicate of diplomatists, pietists, and bankers at work for them.

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popular appreciation, both Mendelssohn and Tieck are to-day quite as popular as our author. The melodies of the former are heard on every piano, and the tales of the latter are in every circulating library—I might say in every family bookshelf, or to a degree in every nursery. Nor is it any proof whatever of genius to merely live among the multitude. There are almost worthless rhymes and jingles which have for centuries been known to scores of millions, while real works of genius have had so few admirers, that Emerson, if I am not mistaken, said there are never more than ten serious readers of Plato at any one time in the world. The error which lies at the bottom of all this is, that whatever has a popular life, because "it must needs have something in it," has necessarily a great deal of merit; which is by no means true. The second error as regards Heine is, that he enormously and very vulgarly yearned for and exaggerated the value of mere popularity.—*Translator.*

[1] "D'un certain Haendel" is only in the French version, but the context indicates that it forms an integral part of the text "as companion to the late Mozart." It may here be observed that in this French version the satirical "great approbation" is changed to "avec de chaleureux applaudissements," and that the concluding sneer at the Parisian public for its ignorance is omitted.—*Translator.*

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Our admirable local compatriot (*Landsmann*) Ferdinand Hiller is too highly esteemed among true artistic connoisseurs not to be included, great as the other names may be which we have mentioned, among the composers whose works received in the Conservatoire deserved recognition. Hiller is more a musician of intellect than of feeling, and he is also reproached with too great erudition. Intellect, intelligence, and knowledge may, it is true, often exert a cooling influence on the compositions of this doctrinaire, but in any case they are always graceful, charming, and beautiful. There is in them no trace of grimacing eccentricity. Hiller has an elective affinity with his compatriot Wolfgang Goethe. Hiller was also born in Frankfort, where I, when last travelling thither, saw his paternal home. It bears the name *Zum grünen Frosch*, "the Green-Frog House," and there is the image of a frog over the door. Hiller's compositions do not remind us, however, of any such unmusical creature, but of nightingales, larks, and other birds of spring.[1]

[1] Very strangely, indeed, the frog was above all other creatures, even nightingales or larks, the chosen symbol of spring in early times. "There is a beautiful emblem," says Schwenk (*Sinnbilder der alten Volker*, p. 132), "associated with the frog. For as he lies all winter frozen up as in death until revived by the warm sun of the returning spring, so he became

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There has indeed been this year no scarcity of concert-giving pianists, and the ides of March were in this respect as memorable as miserable. Then everything that can, bangs and clangs, tinkles and jingles, *tapote et carillone*, without restraint, and *will* be heard, and behaves like a great celebrity, even though it be all for show, and outside the *barrière* of Paris. These disciples of art (*Kunstjünger*) know how to work up to advantage the rags and tatters of praise which they have got out of the newspapers here by begging or intriguing, and so in their puffs in the provinces or in foreign countries, one may read that the far-famed genius, the great Rudolph W—— has arrived, he who is the rival of Liszt and Thalberg, the hero of the piano, who has caused such a sensation in Paris, and even

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the symbol of spring, and was recognised as such in Egypt and Lydia. The frog was also a Christian type of the future life, and was commonly accompanied with such mottoes as *Spes altera vitæ*, and *Vere novo remeat sub brumam rana sepulta; Mortuus in vitam sic redit alter homo.* But the most curious of all is the meaning given by Nicolaus Reusner in his *Emblematum Liber Singularis* (Lyons, 1591), from which we learn that frogs, dumb at home, gave voice when removed to other places; therefore, the frog on Hiller's house was an omen that he would revive the family name, become immortal, and be heard in foreign countries, which all came to pass; and all of which Heine would doubtless have said in much better language had he only known it. It may be added to the above that the frog was also a type of lechery and shameless impudence.—*Translator.*

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been praised by Jules Janin.[1] Hosannah! He who has seen by chance here in Paris such a poor fly *ou pareil insecte*, and who knows how little attention is paid here to far more famous persons, finds the stupid credulity of the public very amusing, and the bold impudence of the virtuosi very disgusting. The evil, however, lies deeper, and it is in the deplorable condition of our daily press, and this is in turn only the result of more deplorable circumstances. I must always repeat it, that there are only three pianists who deserve serious attention, namely, Chopin, the charming poet of sweet sounds, but who unfortunately was all this winter very ill and little visible; then Thalberg, the musical *gentleman*, who has no need to touch the piano to be everywhere welcomed, and who really seems to

[1] The name of Jules Janin is omitted in the French version. It substitutes therefor—"qui à même été loué de tel ou tel roi de la critique." Heine rarely if ever "buckled to" with a strong man who could hit back. That in which he excelled was in killing flies or "insects," as may be seen in the next sentence; and he applies the name so frequently in his works to these his paltry victims, that we are reminded of the legend of the Irish, and German, tailor or weaver, who considered himself a hero because he had slain "sixty at a blow," *i.e.*, flies. *Aquila non captat muscas* was certainly not the motto of our author. It may be observed that "our daily press," which, if it means anything at all, here means the French press which gives puffs, is adroitly changed in the French version to *la presse quotidienne de l'Allemagne!—Translator.*

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regard his talent as a simple attribute; and then our dear Liszt, who, in spite of all perversities and asperities, always remains our dear Liszt, and at this moment [1] has again agitated the *beau-monde* of Paris. Yes, he is here, our Franz Liszt, the wandering knight of all possible orders (excepting that of the French cross of the *Legion d'honneur*, which Louis Philippe will not give to any virtuoso); *he* is here, the Hohenzollern Hechingen Court-Councillor, the Doctor of Philosophy and of double quavers, or of all imaginable crotchets, the miraculous Doctor of Music, the again arisen rat-catcher of Hameln,[2] the new Faust, who is always followed by a poodle in the form of Belloni,[3] the ennobled and yet noble Franz Liszt! He is here, the modern Amphion, who by the sound of his chords set the stones for building the Cathedral of Cologne in motion so that they came together, as did those of the walls of Thebes! He is here, the modern Homer, whom all Germany, Hungary, and France, the three greatest countries, claim as their native

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[1] The sentence in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* ended with these words, "at this moment has caused a disturbance which has afflicted not only all Paris, but also the peaceable author of these papers."—*Translator.*

[2] The French version here adds—"et seducteur d'enfants."

[3] "Toujours suivi d'un caniche transformé en Italien aux cheveux noirs."

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child, while only seven small provincial towns contended for the singer of the Iliad![1] He is here—the Attila, the Scourge of God for all the pianos of Erard, which tremble already at the news of his coming, and which now once more are convulsed, bleed, and wail under his hands, so that the Society for the Protection of Animals really ought to look after them! He is here, the mad, handsome, ugly, enigmatic, terrible, and often very childish, child of his time, the gigantic dwarf, the Rolando Furioso with the Hungarian *sabre d'honneur*, the soundly well-to-day and ill-to-morrow Franz Liszt, whose magic power compels us, whose genius enchants us, the genial Jack Fool (*Hans Narr*), whose nonsense

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[1] There is something very like this in Wyntoun's Chronicle, cited in the Denham Tracts (Folk Lore Society publications, 1892):—

"Braid-walit Berwick,
Tuedis toune, famosit befoir,
Through many a scoir
Off mortal-myndit men;
But now we'll ken
His death has gained mair gloire
Than ever befoir,
Thocht thousandis in thee slain.
Gife cities stroave quha brocht to Homer breath.
Then boldly, Berwick, brag of sic a death:
Gif cities seven for Paganis birth contend,
Then much mair Berwick, famous be his end."

It is applied to death here, but the idea is similar.—*Translator.*

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bewilders our own senses, and to whom we will in any case show the loyal service of making known the great *furore* which he is here exciting.[1] We confirm candidly the fact of his immense success, but in what manner we interpret this fact according to our own private opinion, or whether we accord to, or withhold our private approbation from the distinguished *virtuoso*, will probably be to him a matter of the utmost indifference, seeing that our voice is only the voice of a single individual, and our authority in the art of music is of no remarkable importance.

When I heard some time ago of the vertigo which broke out in Germany, and chiefly in Berlin, when Liszt showed himself there, I shrugged my shoulders pityingly, and said to myself, "Our Germany of Sabbath-like stillness, placid in its calm repose, will not miss the opportunity to take a little lawful exercise; it will shake its limbs, somewhat benumbed by sleep, and my Abderites on the Spree will tickle one another

[1] The French version is here quaint and amusing: "Il est ici, le beau, laid, extravagant, mirobolant et parfois très impertinent enfant de son temps, l'enfant terrible de la musique, le nain gigantesque, le Goliath de la petitesse, le Roland furieux, brandissant son sabre d'honneur, sa Durandal hongroise, l'ingénieux fou dont la demeure plus ou moins factice nous trouble à nous-même le cerveau, et à qui nous rendons en tout cas le loyal service de porter à la connaissance de tout le monde l'incroyable furore qu'il fait ici à Paris."

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into a given enthusiasm, and all will declaim unto their friends—

'O Love, thou ruler of the gods and men!'"[1]

They only make a riot, as I thought, for rioting's sake, and for a row *per se*, no matter what the cause of it may be called—George Herwegh, Saphir, Franz Liszt, or Fanny Elsler; if Herwegh is forbidden, then they take the unobjectionable and non-compromising Liszt. So I thought, and so I explained Lisztomania to myself, and took it for a sign of the want of political liberty beyond the Rhine. And yet I erred, and that I perceived last week in the Italian Opera-House, where Liszt gave his first concert, and that before an assembly which might well be called the flower of Parisian society. Certainly they were *Parisiens éveillés*, wide-awake people, men familiar with the greatest events of our time, who had more or less acted long in its great drama; among them many superannuated invalids of all artistic pleasures, the most wearied men of action, and women much more tired out, for they had been dancing the polka through all the winter—a multitude of busy and *blasé* souls. Truly it was not a German-sentimental, affectedly-

[1] For a very amusing and Sterne-like account how a whole population went wild over this song, consult *Die Abderiten*, by Wieland.—*Translator.*

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sensitive Berlin public before which Liszt played all alone, or rather accompanied only by his genius. And yet how powerful, how startling was the effect of his mere appearance! How vehement was the applause which greeted him! Bouquets were thrown at his feet. It was a grand sight to see how calmly he in his triumph let the bouquets of flowers fall on him, and then placed, while gracefully smiling, a red camelia, which he had plucked from one of the bouquets, in his button-hole. This he did in the presence of some young soldiers just returned from Africa, where they had seen, not flowers, but leaden bullets rain on them, and their breasts had been decorated with the red camelias of their own heart's blood, without the world here taking any special note thereof. "How strange it is!" I thought, "that these Parisians, who have seen Napoleon, who had to make war on war to secure their attention, are now applauding our Franz Liszt!" And what tremendous rejoicing and applause!—a delirium unparalleled in the annals of *furore!* And what is the real cause of this phenomenon? The solution of the question belongs rather to the province of pathology than to that of æsthetics.[1] The electric action of a dæmoniac nature on a closely pressed multitude,

[1] The following sentence in the *Augsburger Zeitung* was subsequently omitted in the early editions.—*Translator.*

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the contagious power of the *extase*, and perhaps a magnetism in music itself, which is a spiritual malady which vibrates in most of us,—all these phenomena never struck me so significantly or so painfully as in this concert of Liszt. A physician whose speciality is the disorders of women, and with whom I conversed as to the magic which our Liszt exercises on his public, smiled mysteriously, and told many things of magnetism, galvanism, electricity, of contagion in an over-heated hall, in which are a vast number of wax-candles, and as many perfumed, perspiring mortals, of histrionic epilepsies or stage-fever, of the phenomena of tickling, of musical cantharides,[1] and other ticklish subjects, which have, I believe, relation to the mysteries of the *Bona Dea*. Yet perhaps the real solution of the question does not lie in such deep and strange mysteries, but on a very prosaic superficial surface, which is, that the whole enchantment, as it seems to me, is that nobody in the world knows how to organise "successes," or rather their *mise en scène*, so well as our Franz Liszt. In this art he is a genius, a Philadelphia, a Bosco, a Houdin,[2]

[1] This is probably an allusion to the extraordinary erotic effects of music on certain persons, especially women.—*Translator.*

[2] Celebrated jugglers. I saw Robert Houdin perform his famous trick of second-sight in Paris in the winter of 1847-48.—*Translator.*

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—yes, a Meyerbeer. The most aristocratic or eminent people are his accomplices or *compères*, and his hired applauders and enthusiasts are admirably trained. Marvellous tales of popping and flowing champagne, and of the most prodigal generosity, trumpeted tremendously in the most truthful newspapers, attract recruits in every town. Yet, notwithstanding this, it may well be that our Franz Liszt is really very generous by nature (*spendabel*), and free from avarice, a shabby vice which infects so many *virtuosi*, especially the Italians, and which we find even in the sweetly melodious Rubini, of whose miserly mind there is told a droll anecdote. Once it befell that the famous singer had undertaken an artistic tour with Liszt, in which profits and expenses were to be equally divided. The great pianist, who always takes with him wherever he goes the general superintendent of his celebrity, or the before-mentioned Signor Belloni, also on this occasion left all the business details to the latter.[1] But when Signor Belloni, after business was completed, handed in his account, Rubini remarked with terror that among the common expenses there was set down a large sum for

[1] French version—"Le Signor Belloni, homme très-dévoué, et comme on dit d'une probité très-rare chez les *cornacs* des virtuoses" (*cornac*, a groom for elephants).—*Translator.*

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bouquets, poems in their praise, and similar costs of ovations. The innocent singer had always supposed that such marks of approbation had been flung at him as tokens of admiration of his beautiful voice, and falling into a great rage, refused to pay for the bouquets, in which there were perhaps the most precious camelias. Were I a musician, this dispute would give me the best of subjects for a comic opera.[1]

But ah! let us not look too closely into the homage paid to great *virtuosi*. For the day of their vain celebrity is very short, and ere long the hour must strike when the Titan of the heavenly tones will shrivel up into a town-musician of trifling stature, who in some coffee-house will tell

[1] The story cannot be true, for no man, however innocent, who ever sung on the stage, could have been ignorant that such marks of applause are very often paid for by the management. I can very well remember inquiring, when I was editor of a newspaper, of the impresario of a very great cantatrice whether there would be bouquets (in order that the report might note it, should there be anything special—as, for instance, a wreath of Marshal Niels or a great bouquet of Dijons). But he replied "No, for there were full houses every night, and the audience would throw a few, or enough." There was a certain large wreath among the properties of the Philadelphia Opera-House, which was thrown so regularly that the whole town knew it. One night, when it had been furbished up with new ribbons, &c., there were three cheers given when it was projected at the *prima donna*. In fact, the Philadelphians, who are *gens d'ordre*, or people of steady habits, would not have considered the performance as complete without *that* wreath.—*Translator.*

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the *habitués*, over his beer, tales of his vanished greatness, and declare on his honour there were thrown at his feet the most magnificent bouquets of camelias, and how once two Hungarian Countesses, to get his handkerchief, which had fallen to the ground, fought and tore one another till they were bleeding! And so the brief ephemeral fame of the *virtuoso* evaporates or vanishes like a dying sound, without trace or echo—like the cry of a camel in the desert.

The transition from the camel to the coney is "rather steep" (*etwas schroff*), or coming down with a jump. Yet I must not pass by those tamer minor pianists who distinguished themselves during the present season. We cannot all be great prophets; there must also be some of the smaller kind who count twelve to the dozen. As greatest among the less I here mention Theodore Döhler. His playing is neat, pretty, nice, and sensitive, and he has a fashion of his own to only touch the keys with the bent ends of his fingers, while his arms are extended horizontally. After Döhler, Halle deserves special mention as a minor prophet; he is a Habakkuk of as modest as true merits. I must speak too of M. Schad, who has about the same rank among pianists as that which we assign to Jonas among the prophets. May he never be swallowed by a whale! An admirable concert

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was given by M. Antoine de Kontski, a young Pole of talent, deserving honour, who has also gained a celebrity. And among the marked events of the season belong the first appearance of young Matthias, whose talent is of a high order. So the older Pharaohs are day by day surpassed and sink into despondent darkness.

As a conscientious narrator, who reports not only the new operas and concerts, but also all the other catastrophes of the musical world, I must also speak of many marriages which have broken out, or which threaten to do so. And I speak here of real, legitimate, highly respectable *marriages*, not of the wild-wedded dilettanteism,[1] which dispenses with mayors wearing the coloured scarfs and the blessing of the Church. *Chacun cherche maintenant sa chacune.* The gentlemen artists now caper on wooers' feet and trill hymeneal songs. The violin becomes brother-in-law to the flute, nor will the horns fail in due time to take their part in the performance.[2] One of three most famed pianists lately wedded the now in every respect greatest basso singer of the Italian Opera, and

[1] *Wilde Ehe*, a wild marriage, is in German concubinage.—*Translator.*

[2] French version—"Le violon devient le beau-frère de la flûte, la trumpette et la timbale s'allient au piano ; ils forment une marche triumphale, et nous les verrons bientôt défiler les cors en tête."

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the lady is beautiful, agreeable, and intelligent. Very recently, too, we have heard that another distinguished artist from Warsaw will enter the holy state of wedlock, and will dare to venture on that high sea for which no compass has as yet been found.[1] Go ahead, O daring sailor! push from land, and may no storm harm thy ship or break thy rudder. And it is said that Panofka, the greatest violinist whom Breslau ever sent to Paris, will soon be married here, and that this master of the bow is weary of his peaceful single

[1] The beginning of this passage was as follows in the first publication :—

"As a conscientious narrator, I must here mention the concerts with which the two musical journals, *La Gazette Musicale* of M. Maurice Schlesinger and *La France Musicale* of M. Escudier, delighted their subscribers. We there heard several remarkably beautiful and yet good lady-singers—Madame Sabatier, Mademoiselle Lia Duport, and Madame Castellan. As these concerts were given gratis, the demands of the public were all the greater; they were, however, amply satisfied. I mention here with pleasure the important news that the Seven Years' War between the two musical journals and their editors is—thank God!—at an end. The noble champions have shaken hands in token of peace, and are now good friends. This friendship will be the more lasting because it is based on mutual esteem. The project of a union by marriage between the two houses was only the idle invention of petty newspapers. Marriage, and that for life, is now the subject of the day in the art world. Thalberg recently wedded the daughter of Lablache, a distinguished, amiable, and intelligent lady. A few days ago, too, we heard that our excellent Edward Wolf married, and has ventured on that high sea for which no compass has as yet been found."

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life, and will also risk the dark unknown beyond. We live in a heroic age. And recently, again, an equally famous virtuoso bass-violator (*berühmter Bratschist*) has betrothed himself. He has, like Theseus, found a fair Ariadne, who will lead him through the labyrinth of life; nor will a thread be wanting, for she is a needlewoman or seamstress!

The violinists are in America, and we have received the most delightful intelligence as to the triumphal procession of Ole Bull, the Lafayette of *puffs*, the advertising hero of two worlds. His agent, who arranged the "successes," had him arrested in Philadelphia to compel him to pay the bills for his ovation. The celebrated or ovated one paid, and now it can no longer be said that the blonde Norman, the genial fiddler, owes aught to any one for his fame. *Ad interim*, we have here in Paris been listening to Signor Sivori, of whom Portia would say, "God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man."[1] At some other time I may overcome my repugnance to speak of this fiddling emetic. Alexander Batta has also given a fine concert this year; he still weeps, as of old, his little child's tears on the great violoncello. On this occasion I could also praise Herr Semmelmann—he needs it![2]

[1] "Merchant of Venice," act i., scene 2.

[2] This name is given as Sélighausen in the French version, and as Seligmann in the *Augsburger Zeitung*.

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Ernst has been here, but, from caprice, he would give no concert; he prefers to play only among friends and to true connoisseurs. Few artists are so loved and esteemed here as Ernst. He deserves it. He is the true successor of Paganini; he inherited the enchanted violin with which the Genoese could move rocks, yea, even logs and clods [1] of men. Paganini, who now leads us up to sunny heights, and anon with a touch of his bow shows us the terrible abyss, had, of course, a far more dæmonic power, but his lights and shadows were sometimes too striking, his contrasts too cutting, and his grandest sounds of nature must often be regarded as artistic mistakes.[2] Ernst is more harmonious, the softer tints are more predominant in his playing; and yet he has a fondness for the fantastic, even for the *baroque* and the odd, if not even for the scurrilous; and many of his compositions

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[1] *Klötz*, a clod, a stupid fellow.

[2] The French version is here much more detailed and intelligible than the German:—"Paganini, qui avec le plus léger coup d'archet, nous conduisait tantôt sur les hauteurs les plus inondées du soleil, et tantôt faisait plonger nos regards dans les plus noires abîmes, possédait, il est vrai, une force plus magique; mais ses ombres et ses lumières étaient parfois trop saccadées, trop crues, ses contrasts trop tranchés, et les accents merveilleux, où il semblait évoquer les voix les plus mystérieuses de la nature, étaient souvent l'effet d'un hasard, et même d'une méprise artistique."

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remind me of the fairy-tale comedies of Gozzi, or the wildest masques, or of the "Carnival of Venice." The piece of music so well known by this name, and which was pirated (*gekapert*) in the most shameless manner by Sivori, is a charming *capriccio* by Ernst.[1] This lover of the fantastic can be, when he chooses, purely poetic, and I heard of late a *nocturne* by him which seemed to be dissolved in beauty. One seemed in hearing to be rapt away into a beautiful Italian night, the cypress trees standing in silent charm, white statues shimmering in the moonlight clear, and bubbling fountains lulling us to dream! Ernst, as is well known, has resigned his office at Hanover, and is no longer Royal Hanoverian Concert-Master. In fact, it was not a suitable place for him. He is much better fitted to lead the *musique de chambre* at the court of some fairy queen—as, for instance, the Fair Morgana; for there he would find an audience which would best understand him, and among them there would be many a form of fabled days of yore of those who felt the deepest charm of art, such as King Arthur, Dietrich of Berne, Ogier the Dane, and lords who lived in song. And, oh! what ladies

[1] The "Carnival of Venice" is a popular very old Venetian air (originally "*Mamma, mamma!*"), which was first adapted and varied by Paganini.—*Translator.*

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would applaud him there! The blonde Hanover ladies may be fair, but they are only awkward peasant maids compared with the fairy Melior, Lady Abunda, lovely Mélusine, Queen Guinevere, and many famed like them, who dwell with Queen Morgana at her court in the famed fairy isle of Avalon! Yes, there I trust to meet with Ernst again, for there he promised me a place at court.[1]

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[1] This paper is extremely interesting as touching on the fact that all the greatest—*i.e.*, the best known and most popular—*virtuosi* or musical performers are invariably those who are the best managed or worked by *impresarios*. However great the genius may be, he requires a good agent, and to a certain extent a good personal appearance. It is remarkable that even Heine could never mention Thalberg without adding that he is "so gentlemanly." I have known a German violinist of the first force, who in his time had ranked among the great, who kept a very humble lager-beer shop in Philadelphia. He could play better than ever, "but his days for the evening dress-coat were over." It requires much more than music to make a popular musician.—*Translator.*

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SECOND PAPER.

PARIS, *May* 1, 1844.

THE Académie Royale de Musique, or the so-called Grand Opera, is situated, as is well known, in the Rue Lepellètier, about the middle thereof, and just opposite the restaurant of Paolo Broggi. Broggi is the name of an Italian who was once the *cuisinier* of Rossini. When the latter came last year to Paris, he visited his former servant, and having dined in his *trattoria,* remained for a long time standing before the door, buried in deep thought and looking at the Opera-House. There was a tear in his eye, and when some one asked him why he seemed so sad, the great *maestro* replied that Paolo had prepared for him his favourite dish of *ravioli,*[1] with Parmesan cheese, cooked as of old, but that he could only eat half his portion, and that even that lay heavy on him; he who had formerly had the stomach of an ostrich could now hardly digest the daily food of an enamoured turtle-dove.

[1] Italian, *raviuóli,* forced-meat balls.—*Translator.*

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We will pass over the possibility or degree of deception which the old joker may have practised on the indiscreet questioner, and limit ourselves to advising every friend of music to eat a dish of *raviuoli* at Broggi's, and then delaying a brief instant before the door of the restaurant to look at the great Opera-House. It is not remarkable for brilliant luxury; it has rather the appearance of an extremely respectable stable, and the roof is flat. On this roof stand eight great statues which represent the Muses. A ninth is wanting, and that one is, unfortunately, the Muse of Music! There are current the most extraordinary explanations as to the cause of the absence of this honourable lady. Prosaic people say that she was blown down by a storm from the roof, but more poetic souls positively declare that poor Polyhymnia threw herself off the roof in desperation at the miserable singing of Monsieur Duprez and Madame Stolz. It may be so; the broken-glass voice—*la voix de verre félé*—of Duprez has become so discordant that no mortal, and much more a Muse, can endure it any longer. And should this thing go on much longer, the other daughters of Mnemosyne will also throw themselves off, so that it will soon be dangerous to pass of evenings along the Rue Lepelletier. As for the bad music which has raged like a disease for some time past in the Grand Opera, I had

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really rather never mention it. Donizetti is at present the Achilles, or best of all there; from which one may get some idea of what the worst must be. I hear that even the Achilles has retired into his tent and sulks—God only knows why!—and that he has announced to the directors that he will not supply the twenty-five operas which he promised, because he has a mind to rest. What gasconading! we could not laugh more if a windmill had said such things. For the mill turns when there is wind, or is still when there is none. But M. Donizetti has here a busy bustling cousin, Signor Accursi, who makes wind for him continually, and more than he needs at that, for Donizetti is, as I have said, the best of the composers of the day.

The last artistic enjoyment which the Academy of Music offered us is the *Lazzarone* of Halevy.[1] This work had a terrible destiny. Halevy here

[1] That which follows, to the words "Every time when an opera fails," is the original conclusion of this paragraph as given in the *Augsburger Zeitung*. In the latest German edition it ends with this remark: "The work had a sad fate; it fell through with drums and trumpets. I refrain from expressing any opinion as to its value; I only bear witness to its terrible end." The French version gives a third and yet different termination —"C'est l'œuvre d'un grand artiste, et je ne sais pas pourquoi elle est tombée. M. Halévy est peut-être trop insouciant, et ne cajole pas assez M. Alexandre, l'entrepreneur des succès et le grand ami de Meyerbeer."—*Translator.*

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found his Waterloo without ever having been a Napoleon. The greatest misfortune for him in all this affair is the defection of Maurice Schlesinger. The latter was always his Pylades, and when Orestes Halevy wrote the most absolute failure of an opera, which broke down ever so utterly, his friend still calmly followed him to the death and printed the work. In an age of selfishness, the sight of such a display of friendly sacrifice was very charming and consoling. But now Pylades declares that the madness of his friend has gone so far, that he can publish nothing more of his without being mad himself.

Every time when an opera fails in the Academy of Music or at the *Bouffes*, or any such lamentable *fiasco* occurs, there is seen an uncanny dark and haggard form with a pale face and coal-black eyes, a kind of masculine *banshee* (*Ahnfrau*), whose apparition always presages a musical disaster. The Italians, as soon as they see him, hastily cast out the fore and little finger,[1] and say, "That

[1] A sign made by holding in the middle and ring finger with the thumb, and extending the fore and little finger like horns. Its object is to repel the influence of the evil eye or all sorcery. It is chiefly used in Southern Italy, for though common in the North, the sign of the *fica* or *castagna*, made by projecting the thumb between the second and third fingers of the fist, is considered more powerful. Both were well known to the ancient Romans. Ovid describes that of *le corne*, mentioned by one author, in these words :—

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is the *jettatore.*" But the frivolous French, who have no superstitions, only shrug their shoulders, and call that form "Monsieur Spontini." It is indeed our former general director of the Berlin Grand Opera, the composer of the *Vestal* and of *Ferdinand Cortez*, two magnificent masterpieces, which will long bloom in men's memories and be long admired, while the man himself has long been lost to admiration, and is only a faded ghost, who enviously spectres about and vexes himself at the life of the living. He cannot console himself that he has so long been dead, and his baton as leader passed into the hands of Meyerbeer. The latter, as the deceased declares, drove him away from his Berlin, which he so greatly loved, and any one who has pity on his fallen greatness and patience may hear him tell, in minutest detail, what innumerable legal proofs of conviction he has collected to make manifest Meyerbeer's conspiracy and intrigues. As I hear, German good-nature has lent its pen to edit these proofs of folly.[1]

The fixed idea of the poor man is and ever will be Meyerbeer, and the drollest tales are

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"Signaque dat digitis, medio cum pollice junctis." *Vide* "Etruscan Remains in Popular Tradition," by Charles Godfrey Leland. London; T. F. Unwin, pp. 304-305.—*Translator.*

[1] This sentence is omitted from the French version. — *Translator.*

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told of this animosity, which renders itself harmless by an excessive intermingling of vanity. If some author complains of Meyerbeer that the latter has not, for example, set to music the poems which were sent him years ago, then Spontini grasps the hand of the injured poet, and cries, "*J'ai votre affaire!* I know how you can revenge yourself on Meyerbeer; it is an infallible means, and it is this: write a long article on *me*—and the more you praise my merit, the more will you vex him!" Another time, should a French Minister complain that the composer of the *Huguenots*, despite the kindness with which he was treated here, has accepted a servile court appointment in Berlin, then our Spontini leaps joyously at the Minister and cries, "*J'ai votre affaire!* You can inflict the most painful punishment on the ungrateful wretch—yes, the stab of a poignard—by appointing *me* an officer of the *Légion d'honneur.*"

Not long ago, Spontini found poor Léon Pillet, the unfortunate director of the Grand Opera, in a rage at Meyerbeer, who had notified him, through M. Gouin, that he could not give him the *Prophet* on account of the inferior abilities of the singers whom he employed. How the eyes of the Italian flashed! "*J'ai votre affaire,*" he cried, enraptured. "I will give you a divine counsel how you can humble the ambitious intriguer to death. Let my

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statue be carved of the size of life, and place it in the *foyer* of the Grand Opera, and the block of marble will crush the heart of Meyerbeer." Spontini's state of mind begins to cause great anxiety to his friends, especially to the family of Erard, the wealthy manufacturer of pianos, to whom Spontini is by his wife a brother-in-law. Lately the composer was found in the upper halls of the Louvre, where the Egyptian antiquities are placed. The Chevalier Spontini stood with folded arms like a statue for nearly an hour before a great mummy, whose magnificent gold mask proclaimed a monarch who could be none less than that Amenophes under whose rule the children of Israel left the land of Egypt.[1] But Spontini, at last breaking silence, spoke as follows to his distinguished fellow-mummy :—

"Unhappy Pharaoh! thou art the cause of my misfortunes! Hadst thou not suffered the children of Israel to depart from the land of Egypt, or if thou hadst only drowned them all in the Nile, I should not have been driven by Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer from Berlin, and I should still have been there, directing the Grand Opera and the royal concerts. Unhappy Pharaoh, weak

[1] The mummy of this Pharaoh is, however, believed to have been discovered long after Heine wrote the above, and it is now in the museum at Cairo. Over it J. Addington Symonds is marvellously eloquent in his book on the Nile.—*Translator.*

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crocodile-king! it came to pass, in consequence of thy half-way measures, that I am now a ruined man, and Moses and Halevy and Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer have conquered!" Such was the speech of the unhappy man, and we could not withhold from him our compassion.

As regards Meyerbeer, his *Prophet*, as I predicted, will not appear for a long time; nor will he himself, as the newspapers announce, permanently establish himself in Berlin. He will dwell, alternating as usual, half the year in Paris, and the other half in Berlin, where he is bound by his engagement. His situation recalls that of Proserpine, with this difference, that the poor *maestro* has hell in both places. We expect him here this summer in our beautiful lower regions, where many triple scores of musical devils and devilesses are waiting to fill his ears with howls. From morning to night he must listen to male and female singers who would fain make a *début* here, and during his leisure hours travelling English ladies beset him with their albums.

As I am informed, next winter the *Crociato* will be given at the Italiens, and the re-casting it, to which Meyerbeer let himself be persuaded, will call up some new deviltries for him. Whatever may happen, he will not feel himself in heaven when he sees the *Huguenots* played here, which, however, must always be the case so as to

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replenish the treasury after every mischance. In fact, it is only the *Huguenots* and *Robert le Diable* which actually live on in the heart of the public, and these masterpieces will long endure.[1]

There has been no lack of débutants this winter in the Grand Opera. A German made his first appearance as Marcel in the *Huguenots*. He was perhaps in Germany only a boor with a bear-like growling bier-basso voice, and so thought he might appear in Paris as a bass singer. The fellow brayed like a donkey of the forest (*Waldesel*). There was also a lady, whom I suspect of being German,[2] "produced herself" on the boards of the Rue Lepelletier. She is said to be remarkably virtuous, but sings extremely false. According to report, all of her hair, two-thirds of her teeth, her hips, and *derrière* are also false. . . . Our *prima donna*, Madame Stolz, cannot hold her ground much longer, and though she has, as a woman, at command all the tricks of her sex,[3] she will be at last conquered by the great Giacomo

[1] The preceding paragraph, or from the words, "As I am informed," is omitted from the French version.—*Translator.*

[2] French version — "Une dame Allemande aussi, que je soupçonne d'être Berlinoise, se montra sur les planches de," &c. —*Translator.*

[3] The French version is here far more complimentary—"Et bien qu'elle soit jolie, très-gracieuse, très-spirituelle et pleine de talents, et qu'en femme elle ait à sa disposition toutes les ruses de son sexe, elle finira par succomber," &c.

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Machiavelli, who wishes to see Viardot Garcia engaged in her place, to sing the leading part in the *Prophet.* Madame Stolz foresees her fate, she knows that even the monkey-love—*la folle tendresse*—which the director of the opera devotes cannot help her when the great master of musical art will play his game, so she has determined to voluntarily leave Paris, never to return, and pass her life afar in foreign lands. "*Ingrata patria,*" she lately said, "*ne ossa quidem mea habebis!*" "Ungrateful land, thou shalt not have my bones." And in fact for some time she has been all skin and bones.

At the Italiens in the *opera buffa* there were as brilliant *fiascos* as in the Grand Opera. And there was much complaint of the singers; the only difference being that very often the Italians would not sing, while the poor French vocal heroes could not. Only that perfect pair of nightingales, Signor Mario and Signora Grisi, were always punctually at their posts in the Salle Ventadour, and warbled for us the most blooming spring, while in the world without were snow and wind, piano-concerts, deputies, debates, and polka-madness, spinning round and round! Yes, they are always charming nightingales, and the Italian Opera, for them, an ever-blooming, singing, forest fair, to which I often fled when wintry grief spread fogs around me, or the frost

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of life became too sharp and unendurable. There in the pleasant corner of a retired box one can be most agreeably warmed again, and certainly does not lose his life in the frost. The spell of music turns to poetry what even now seemed harsh reality, all grief is gone in arabesques of flowers, and then, scarce knowing why, up laughs the heart. Oh, what a joy it is when Mario sings, and in the eyes of Grisi the sweet tones of the beloved lark reflect themselves as if in visible echo; and what joy when Grisi sings again, and in her voice the tender glance and the entranced smile of Mario echo most melodiously! It is a charming pair; and the Persian bard who called the nightingale the rose of birds, and then the rose the nightingale of flowers, would here be in a true imbroglio, for Mario and Grisi both are famed as much for beauty as they are for song.[1]

Yet, despite the presence of that charming

[1] They were both, especially Giulia Grisi, extremely amiable. A MS. of French songs in my possession contains one bitterly satirising all the *prima donne* of Paris in 1848 except Grisi, and it ends with an outburst in her praise, mentioning that she is even loved by all the *troupe*. I have the autographs of both, written for me. Mario had refused to sing under plea of illness. I do not know whether he was "indisposed" to agree with his manager or not, but he was apprehensive lest the public should think he was pretending illness. So for a sentiment he wrote, "Sono ammulato oggi—("I am ill to-day").—MARIO."—*Translator.*

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couple, we miss here at the Bouffes Madame Pauline Viardot, or, as we prefer to call her, (the) Garcia. She is not replaced, and no one can replace her. She is not a nightingale who has only the single talent of her kind, and who exquisitely sobs and trills in the style of spring, nor is she a rose, for she is ugly, but of a kind of ugliness which is noble—I might almost say beautiful, and which often enraptured the great painter of lions, Lacroix,[1] almost to inspiration. In fact, Madame Garcia reminds us much less of civilised beauty and the tame grace of our European home-land, than of the strange splendour of an exotic wilderness; and in many periods of her passionate performance, as when she opens even too widely her great mouth with its dazzling white teeth, and smiles with such horrible sweetness and such a gracefully charming grimace, one feels at the instant as if the most marvellous and monstrous growths and living creatures of India or Africa were before us; as if giant palms enlaced by thousand-flowered *lianas* were shooting up around; nor would one be astonished if suddenly a leopard or a giraffe, or even a herd of young elephants, should run across the scene.[2]

[1] In the French version—"De la Croix."

[2] The French version is here more extended, and much more suggestive as to the magnetic influence of Madame Viardot Garcia—"Et l'on ne serait pas étonné si tout à coup un léopard

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We hear with great pleasure that this singer is again on her way to Paris.

While the Academy of Music was dragging along so wretchedly, and the Italiens limping along as miserably behind it, the third lyric scene, or the Opera Comique, rose to its most joyous height. Here one success succeeded another, and there was cheerful ringing in the money-chest; in fact, there was a much larger crop of money than of laurels,[1] which was, however, no misfortune for the management. The texts of the new operas which were given were all by Scribe, the man who once pronounced the great decision that "gold is only a chimæra,"[2] and who runs after it, all the same, all the time. He is the man of money, of singing realism, who never once climbed into the romance of a sterile world of clouds, and who holds fast to the earthly

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ou une girafe, ou même une troupe de jeunes éléphants, arrivaient sur la scène, pour s'y livrer à des ébats amoureux. Quels piétinements! quels coups de trompe! quel talent grandiose!" The reader may here re-echo the last two words in application to our author. The friar's breeches described by Rabelais were as nothing compared to this.—*Translator.*

[1] Lest the author should here be accused of an "Irish simile," I would state that the term "gold crop" has frequently been applied very seriously in newspapers to the annual production of that metal in California and Australia.

[2] "Gold is only a chimæra,
Money all a fleeting dream."
This is the beginning of a song in *Robert le Diable.*

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reality of sensible marriage (*mariage de raison*), industrious citizenship, and the author's percentage (*tantième*). Tremendous approbation has been awarded to Scribe's new opera, the *Siren*, for which Auber composed the music. The author and musician are perfectly matched; they have the most admirable perception or sense of the interesting; they know how to agreeably entertain us; they enrapture and dazzle us by the brilliant facets of their wit; they both have a certain *filigrane* talent for welding together all kinds of charming trifles, and they make us forget that there is such a thing as poetry. They are a kind of art-harlots or *lorettes*, whose smiles drive away from our souls and memories all the grim ghostly stories of the past, and with their coquettish caresses and merry play banish buzzing fears of the future—those invisible mosquitos—as if with a peacock *chasse-mouche*. Adam, whose *Cagliostro* lately obtained such light and easily won laurels at the Opera Comique, also belongs to this harmlessly wanton tribe. Adam is a most agreeable, fascinating character, endowed with a talent which is capable of far greater development. Thomas also deserves an honourable mention, his operetta of *Mina* having been very successful.

All these triumphs were, however, surpassed by the popularity of the *Deserter*, an old opera

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by Monsigny, which the Opera Comique has disinterred from the pigeon-holes of the past. There is in it true French music, a serene yet joyous grace, a charming innocence, a freshness like the perfume of forest flowers, natural truth, even poetry. Yes, poetry is not absent, but it is of the kind which is without the awe of the infinite or mysterious enchantment; it is without sorrow, or irony or *morbidezza*—I might almost call it an elegant peasant-poetry of health.[1] The opera of Monsigny at once recalled to me his contemporary, the painter Greuze. I seemed to behold in reality before me the landscapes which the latter painted, and at the same time to hear the musical accompaniment belonging to them.[2] In listening to that opera, I realised clearly how the arts of design and of recitation of that period breathed one and the same spirit, and their masterpieces express the most intimately blent elective affinity.[3]

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[1] The word "peasant," which is the most characteristic of all here as recalling popular songs, is omitted from the French version.

[2] French version—"Et je ainsi retrouver dans certains morceaux de Monsigny le pinceau de Greuze."

[3] This idea, that music can bring before us the visible, was, however, developed far more boldly and clearly, even into superstitious faith, by the Chinese more than two thousand years ago. Thus Confucius, by deeply studying and frequently playing a certain old musical piece, succeeded in perfectly realising

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I cannot end this letter without remarking that the musical season is not as yet at an end, and that it is singing and resounding against all precedent in the month of May. The most magnificent balls and concerts are now being given, and the polka rivals the piano. Ears and feet are fatigued, yet cannot give themselves unto repose. Spring, which came so early this year, has made *fiasco*, for people hardly notice the green leaves and the sunlight. Truly, I think that physicians, and especially those for lunatics, will soon have enough to do. In this strangely-varied wildly-coloured delirium, in this madness of pleasure, in this singing, springing, ever-ringing whirlpool, lurk death and insanity. The hammers of the pianoforte work terribly on our nerves, and that great whirling convulsion the polka gives us the *coup de grâce* or final blow.

What is the polka? To answer this question of the time I should require six columns. However, when more important subjects grant me leisure, I will return to it.[1]

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the personal appearance and dress of the composer, seeing him, as it were, before his eyes. For further details of this legend I refer the reader to "The Music Lesson of Confucius, and other Poems." London: Trübner & Co. Even Heine never got quite so far as this.—*Translator.*

[1] This final paragraph is omitted in the French original. Few readers who cannot recall the Forties can have any idea of the extraordinary sensation which was then caused by the polka all

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over the civilised world. It is worth remarking that till that time such æsthetic or similar manias, whether caused by the advent of a great singer or dancer, a new dance, fashion, or idea, thrilled strangely through all classes of society in a manner which is now utterly unknown, and which will probably be as incomprehensible in 1950 as the witch mania of the olden time is to us. This recalls to me the subject under discussion. There was quite a polka literature at the time, but I doubt whether Heine himself could have correctly answered his own question as to what it was. I believe that I was the first to establish from a passage in Delancre, a writer of the sixteenth century (referred to in Heine's "Germany," vol. ii. p. 278; also "Gypsy Sorcery," pp. 158, 159) that the *Trescone alla Boema*, a Bohemian rigadoon, which he and others describe as the witch-dance of all others, was a polka, because in it the performers turned away their heads from one another. Now the polka is unquestionably Bohemian despite its name, or at least a Slavonian dance; and one in which the heads of the performers are often coquettishly averted. The excitement which it caused when revived in 1843 was indeed suggestive of witch madness and its early origin. Even thus in ashes glow their wonted fires. This dying out of all great æsthetic or romantic excitements is a very significant sign of our age, and one that civilised society has entered on a transition stage, which few as yet comprehend. It is due to our author to remark that Heine foresaw and clearly predicted it at a time when he was utterly alone in so doing. I may add that the first polka air which came to Western Europe was known as the "Bohemian" (although "polka" means Polish girl), and it was to it that the famed polka macaronic of *Punch* was written:—

"Qui vult dancere nunc modo,
Wants to dance in the fashion, oh!
Debet discere ought to know
Kickere floor cum heel and toe!"—*Translator.*

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A LATER NOTICE.

[INSPIRED by a melancholy fancy, I add to the preceding paper the following pages, which I wrote in the summer of 1847, and which form my last musical correspondence. Since then, all music has ceased for me, and I little thought at the time when I sketched the suffering picture of Donizetti that a similar and far more painful affliction would soon befall me. This is the short notice to which I allude:]

Since that of Gustavus Adolphus, of glorious memory, no Swedish reputation has made so much noise in the world as Jenny Lind's. What we heard from England on the subject bordered on the incredible. The newspapers seemed to ring and roar with trumpet-blasts and *fanfarons* of triumph; we heard from all naught save Pindaric odes of praise. A friend told me of an English city where all the bells were rung as the Swedish nightingale entered, the bishop of the place commemorating the event by a remarkable sermon. Clad in his Anglican-Episcopal costume, which resembles the ghastly corpse-

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costume of a *chef des pompes funebres*, he rose in the pulpit of the principal church and greeted the newly-arrived *artiste* as a saviour in female attire, as a lady-redeemer who had descended from heaven to save our souls by her song from sin, while all other *cantatrice* were so many she-devils, who would fain warble us into the jaws of Satan.[1] The Italians, Grisi and Persiani, must now turn yellow as canary-birds from sheer envy and spite, while our Jenny, the Swedish nightingale, flies from one triumph to another. I say *our* Jenny, for *au fond* the Swedish nightingale does not exclusively represent little Sweden, but also the whole Germanic confederation of allied Northern races, the Cimbrian as well as the Teutonic—yea, she is German as much as her naturally grown sisters drowsy as trees (*wie ihre naturwüchsigen und pflanzenschläfrigen Schwestern*) on the banks of the Elbe and Neckar. She belongs to Germany, just as, according to the assurance of Franz Horn, Shakespeare also belongs to us, as does Spinoza, who, according to his very deepest inner nature, can only be a German;[2]

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[1] French version—"Les autres *cantatrices*, disait-il, n'étaient qu'autant de diablesses qui, par leurs fredons, leurs trilles et leurs roulades impies, nous entraînent dans l'abomination et la damnation, dans la guele de Satan."—*Translator.*

[2] The French version adds—"à ce que disent nos philosophes patriotes." Spinoza in Italian (*spinoso*) means a hedgehog—

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therefore with pride we proclaim Jenny Lind as ours. Rejoice, O Uckermark, for thou too hast thy part in this renown. Jump, O Massmann, leap thy most patriotic and joyous leaps, for our Jenny speaks no Roman Red-Italian slang, but Gothic Scandinavian, the most German of German ;[1] and thou mayest greet her as *compatriote*—only you should wash yourself well before taking her Teutonic hand or offering thine. Yes, Jenny Lind is German ; even the name recalls the Linden, the green cousin of the German oak. She has not black hair, like the *prima donnas* of Italy. Northern feeling swims with moonlight in her blue eyes, and in her voice there rings the purest virginity ! There it is ! "Maidenhood is in her voice," as all the *old spinsters* of London, all the *prudes* of ladies and pious *gentlemen*—the still surviving *mauvaise queue* of Richardson—repeated it, turning up their eyes, and all Great

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a term aptly applied to his disciple Carlyle, and which would fit fairly well to the *noli me tangere* Heine.

[1] The French version is here the clearer of the two—"Jubilez, Westphalia et Poméranie, vous aussi participez à cette gloire ! Saute de joie, Massmann, grand sauteur de l'art gymnastique, fais tes bonds les plus tudesques, car notre Jenny ne parle pas un baragouin roman, une espèce de latin bouilli, mais le pur gothique, le scandinave, l'allemand le plus allemand." It is most remarkable that Heine does not allude to the fact that *Lind* itself means in German soft, mild, and gentle. —*Translator.*

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Britain celebrated in Jenny Lind a warbling virginity, a singing maidenhead! This is the key of the unintelligible, enigmatically great enthusiasm which Jenny discovered in England, and which she—in confidence between us—knows very well how to turn to profit. She only sings, it is said, in order to give up secular singing as soon as possible, and as soon as the necessary dowry shall have been accumulated, to marry a young Protestant clergyman, the pastor Svenske, who meantime waits for her at home in his idyllic parsonage behind Upsala, to the left hand, round the corner.[1] It has been recently reported that the young pastor Svenske is only a myth, and that the true beloved of the lofty maid (*der hohen Jungfrau*) is an old dismissed comedian or *cabotin* of the Stockholm stage; but that is certainly a slander. The spirit of chastity of this *prima donna immaculata* is most beautifully shown in her abomination of Paris, the modern Sodom, which repugnance she expresses on every occasion, to the greatest edification of all the *dames patronesses* of virtue on the other side of the

[1] French version—"Le jeune pastor Svenske, qui dans l'intervalle, l'attend avec une fidélité tout pastorale dans son presbytère idyllique dernière Upsala, je crois à gauche de la grande route, en tournant du côté des tilleuls qui conduisent à un moulin à vent." Directions which lead to a "windmill" are very suspicious.

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Channel. Jenny has vowed in the most determined manner never to give her vocal virginity to the French public on the vicious stage of the Rue Lepelletier; she sternly refused all the offers which M. Léon Pillet has made her by means of his *ruffiani* of art.[1] Truly, "this too rude virtue startles me," as old Paulet says in the drama of *Maria Stuart*. Is there any truth in the popular legend that the Nightingale of to-day was during her earlier years in Paris, and received musical instruction in the sinful *Conservatoire*, like other singing birds who have since then become very seductive greenfinches? Or is Jenny afraid of that frivolous Parisian criticism which does not criticise the morals, but only the voice, and which regards defective education as the greatest vice? Be that as it may, our Jenny will not come to Paris, nor raise the French by her singing from the gulf of sin. They must remain fallen unto damnation eternal.

Here, in the musical world of Paris, all remains unchanged; in the Académie Royale de Musique there is always a gloomy, cold, and damp winter, while without we have May sunshine and perfume of violets. The statue of the divine Rossini

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[1] *Ruffiano*, a pander (Italian), hence our word ruffian. "In the drama of *Maria Stuart*" is only in the French version.—*Translator.*

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stands, as usual, sadly mourning and still silent, in the vestibule. It is an honour to M. Léon Pillet that he raised a statue to this true genius during his lifetime. Nothing is more ridiculous than to see the grimaces with which envy and jealousy regard it. When Signore Spontini passes by, he always, stumbling, strikes against that stone. Our great master Meyerbeer shows himself as regards it much shrewder, and when he goes of evenings to the opera, he always very prudently avoids that marble of offence; he even takes care not to see it, like unto the Jews of Rome, who in the same manner, however hurried they may be with their business, go a long way round so as to keep out of the way of the fatal triumphal arch of Titus, which was erected to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem. The news as to the state of Donizetti's health becomes sadder every day. While his melodies in merry play delight the world, while he is sung and carolled everywhere, he sits, a terrible form of lunacy, in a hospital near Paris. For some time he kept a childish consciousness as to his toilette, and had himself every day dressed very carefully *en parfaite mise de gala de cour*, his dress-coat adorned with all his decorations and orders, and so he sat motionless, with his hat in his hand, from early morning unto evening late. But even that is all over now, and he no longer

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recognises any one. Such is the lot of poor humanity.[1]

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[1] It is probable that the impressions of all who read these remarks on Jenny Lind will be that Heinrich Heine simply ridiculed with libertine instinct, or as a naturally very free-thinking man of the world, that virtue and propriety, with which he had so little sympathy. Yet, on maturely considering the "Lindomania" (of which I saw a great deal) at the present day, I can only sincerely say that I consider every word of Heine's comments as truthful and deserved; for to such an extravagant degree were the praises of her morality carried in England and America, that it would really have seemed as if it were for the first time in history that such an object as a virtuous Swedish girl or opera-singer had ever been seen or heard of; and to fairly and honestly judge by the tone of the press, scores of thousands flocked to see such an unparalleled curiosity as a virgin vocalist. As a writer said, "Elle chantait plus avec sa virginité qu'avec sa voix." Indeed, the Black Swan would have been a far more appropriate term than the Nightingale; for it was more as a moral *rara avis* than as a singer that she was really made attractive to the multitude. There was something of a *faux air* and of the *réclame* in her career from the beginning, and she seemed to have fallen naturally into the right hands when my late friend, Mr. Phineas T. Barnum, became her impresario.

That Jenny Lind Goldschmidt was an admirable and pleasing and even in her way almost a *great* singer, is not to be denied. I myself much preferred Sontag and Grisi, as far more finished and refined in execution. I could never divest myself of the idea that there was a marked remainder of the peasant-girl or of the *gauche* Teuton in the Swedish artiste. I was particularly struck by this in her great rôle of Norma, which I saw in Frankfort-on-the-Main, and in which she certainly left the impression on my mind that her style was *not* adapted to the music or the part, and that her acting had been very much over-praised.

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By odd coincidence, I am writing this in Homburg, and my first visit to the place was closely connected with this hearing the Nightingale in *Norma*. I was then studying in Heidelberg. One morning a student from Jena, named Grüner, came into my room, and proposed that we should go to Frankfort and hear Jenny Lind sing in *Norma*. I replied that I had only just enough money to take me to the end of the month. "Oh, never mind that," he replied. "We will go on to Homburg and win enough money at *rouge et noir* to pay our expenses." On this extremely prudent system or chance we departed. We heard Jenny Lind in *Norma*, and as fortune favours the bold, I actually did contrive to win enough at *rouge et noir* to not only pay all expenses, but to have a surplus.

I had previously heard Jenny Lind sing at a concert in Heidelberg, where all the world of youth of course went wild over her. The instant that she left the hotel, her room was given, as I heard, to an old Englishman, who turned in and went to bed, not knowing whom he had succeeded. A large party of students, learning that the lady had just departed, burst into the chamber, tore all the bed-clothes to strips as souvenirs of her beauty, and departed, leaving the occupant, who could not understand what it all meant, under the impression that they must be mad.

Jenny Lind as a singer was marvellous in trilling, warbling, and *fioriture*, but even in all this she was surpassed by Madame Parepa Rosa, whom I heard for the last time the first night she sang in *Aïda*, in Cairo.

Since writing this note I have read, in *Gossip of the Century*, a criticism of Jenny Lind which agrees remarkably with what I have written.

I trust that this and certain other notes and reminiscences will not have seemed impertinent to the reader. Even *graffiti* or scrawlings on walls become sometimes of value in the course of time.

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